ORNAMENT IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE

MARGARET PROSSER ALLEN

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Indian architecture is the result of many diverse influences—invasions that have conditioned the lives of the people and empires that have flourished and faded, as well as geography and climate, various religions and philosophies. In *Ornament in Indian Architecture* Margaret Prosser Allen presents some of India's greatest architectural achievements in the richness of photographic detail. Her study features more than 400 plates that start with the second-century B.C. stupa at Sāñchī and conclude with the Indo-Muslim architecture of the Moghul period. Most buildings are shown as a total structure, and then individual figurative and decorative elements are emphasized and shown as an integral part of the structure itself.

The fact that Indian architecture is a visual presentation of religious philosophy has greatly affected its design. The earliest Indian architecture that survives today is primarily Buddhist, due to the Emperor Aśoka's conversion to Buddhism and the use of stone as a building material. Two of the earliest surviving architectural forms are the stupa and rock-cut cave architecture.

The stupa is a hemispherical dome of earth and brick that was originally a simple burial mound. During the lifetime of the Buddha it was common practice to raise an earthen mound over the remains of holy men and those of noble birth. According to tradition the Buddha's ashes were deposited in eight stupas, and Emperor Aśoka is said to have divided these ashes further and placed them in stupas that he erected in all the large towns of his domain. Ultimately the stupa form became the symbol of the Buddha's divinity, an emblem of Enlightenment and Nirvana.

The location of rock-cut cave architecture was determined by the topography of the land, and most of it is found in the Western Ghats, within two hundred miles of Bombay. The Buddhists produced two types of cave—a monastery or

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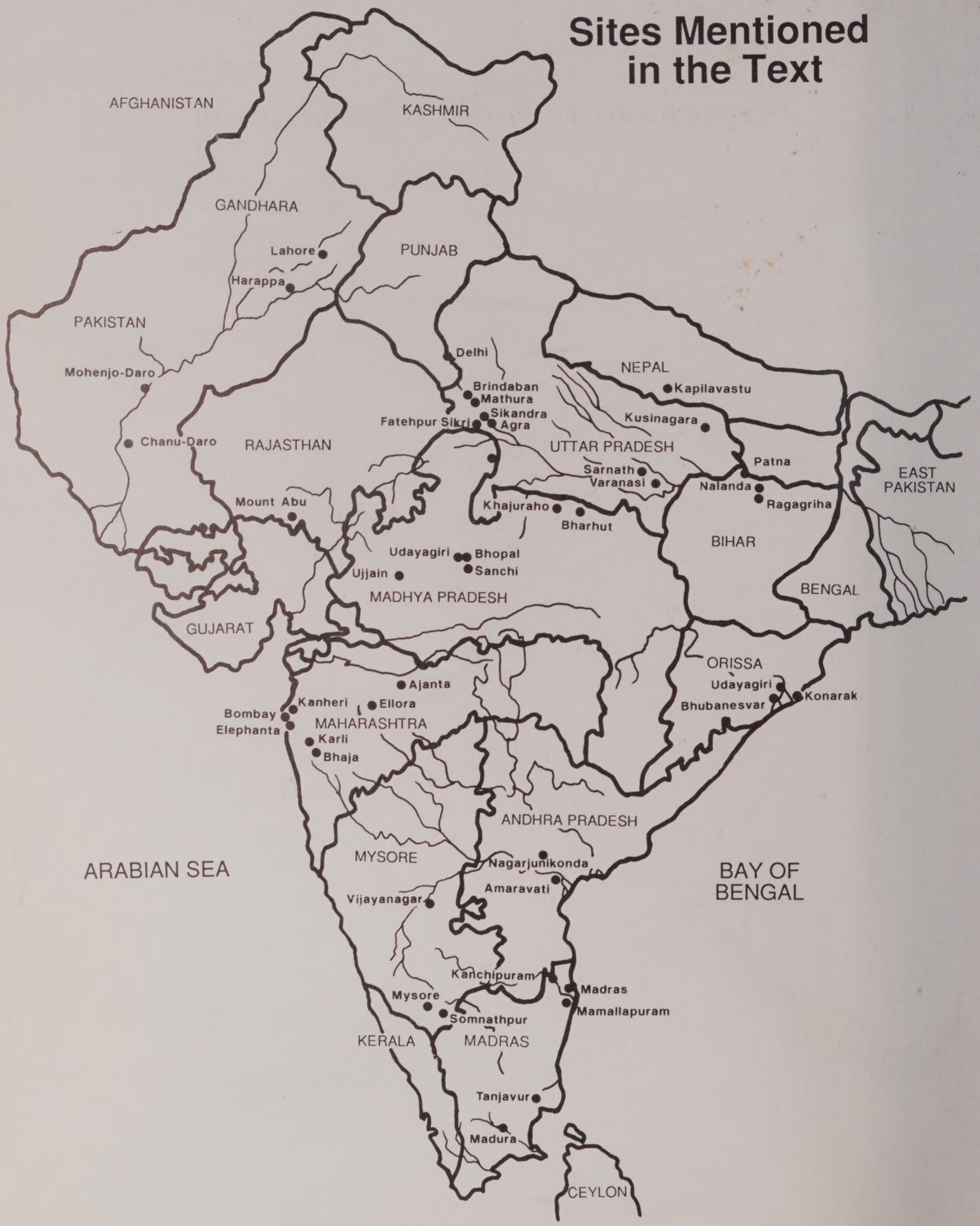
Ornament in Indian Architecture

Sites Mentioned in the Text



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MARGARET PROSSER ALLEN

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Newark: University of Delaware Press
London and Toronto: Associated University Presses

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Associated University Presses
440 Forsgate Drive
Cranbury, NJ 08512

Associated University Presses
25 Sicilian Avenue
London WC1A 2QH, England

Associated University Presses
P.O. Box 39, Clarkson Pstl. Stn.
Mississauga, Ontario,
L5J 3X9 Canada

The paper used in this publication meets the requirements
of the American National Standard for Permanence of Paper
for Printed Library Materials Z39.48-1984.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Allen, Margaret Prosser, 1913–
Ornament in Indian architecture / Margaret Prosser Allen.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-87413-399-8 (alk. paper)
1. Decoration and ornament, Architectural—India—Themes, motives.
I. Title.
NA3576.A1A45 1991
720′.954—dc20 89-40766
CIP

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In Memory of
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Preface

THE ART OF ANCIENT INDIA CONSISTS PRIMARILY OF ITS ARCHITECTURE. ONE OF THE GREAT contributions of Indian architecture is its spiritual content, for here art is the vehicle of religion. Many books discuss in great detail the philosophical mysticism of all Indian art, and the reader concerned with this subject should consult them, for this book attempts to present the iconography and ornament of Indian architecture as a universal means of expression, to be observed and appreciated simply as art. Although Indian architecture was not conceived as a problem of aesthetics but rather as an attempt to communicate to devotees the fundamental truths that govern their actions, its craftsmen were usually skilled artists who observed their world and created a part of what they saw. India's architecture is sometimes compared to the medieval cathedrals of Europe, but the tall, slender Christs and saints of the Middle Ages are far removed from the swirling, buxom figures found on Khajurāho. If, as some scholars say, the temples of India are religious books carved in stone, they also reveal some of the culture of the people who carved them, the culture of a great civilization.

The story is told that Will Durant was once challenged to sum up civilization in half an hour. His summation, which took about a minute, was reported as follows: Civilization is a stream with banks. The stream is sometimes filled with blood from people killing, stealing, and doing things historians usually record, while on the banks unnoticed, people build homes, make love, raise children, sing songs, write poetry, and whittle figures. The story of civilization is the story of what happened on the banks.

In dealing with Indian art and architecture many historians treat the work of Muslim India separately from other Indian art, as one more properly belonging to Islamic culture. Such reasoning does not seem logical since there is little doubt that the Muslim architecture of India was not only influenced by earlier Indian work but probably would not have been possible in any other country. The Muslims had to depend on the artist-craftsmen of India with their knowledge of indigenous building traditions that would undoubtedly influence any imported art.

This book includes a brief introduction and descriptive notes on the plates. These in no way substitute for a knowledge of India's historical and cultural background. Since I am not a student of Indian history and culture and claim no expertise in these areas, I have borrowed freely from books discussing these subjects as well as Indian iconography. Since my field of experience is art and design, I have focused on the art quality of the photographic details. I do not pretend to present a complete visual history of Indian architecture. Although the material is generally presented in chronological order, many major monuments are omitted. Of those included many show details not previously published or readily available in current publications.

Before a complete account of India's civilization is recorded, much work remains to be done. Most of the great cities of ancient India have been destroyed, and modern towns and villages now take their place. There are many remote and little-known ruins that have not been excavated or studied, but each year new information is added. From diverse sources scholars methodically piece together information, but there is disagreement on some points. The Indians apparently were not systematic historians, resulting in confusion about some dates and events.

If it is true that architecture mirrors the civilization that produced it, it should follow that some knowledge of that civilization will help us to understand the architecture. This is particularly important if we are concerned with an art form foreign to Western culture. However, even with no knowledge of India's ancient civilization, its architectural monuments, or the religious philosophy that produced them, surely any observer must feel the impact of these superb works of art—creations that speak eloquently for themselves, despite the fact that sometimes the language injects foreign phrases.

The art of India followed the trade routes and was exported to much of Asia. However, this book deals

only with architecture in India and is primarily concerned with buildings that survive today. In a few cases plates show sculpture and fragments from now-destroyed shrines, but most of the photographic details are presented as an integral part of the building rather than as a fragment divorced from its architectural setting.

This is an art book. Its primary aim is a visual presentation of some of India's architectural ornament as seen by a Westerner. For centuries the architectural monuments of India have inspired the country's own artists and craftsmen. The rug maker, the goldsmith and metal worker, the textile designer, the painter, the potter, and the sculptor all have drawn inspiration from the rich and varied ornamentation that is an integral part of Indian architecture. I hope that the photographic details in this book will serve as a source of inspiration for other artists and craftsmen. The brief notes on the plates may help the reader trace the development of Indian architecture but the heart of the book is the photographic detail—a visual presentation of some of "what happened on the banks." [All photographs were taken by the author.]

Ornament in Indian Architecture

Introduction

THE HISTORY OF INDIAN ARCHITECTURE MAY BE COMPARED TO A GREAT RIVER SYSTEM WITH MANY tributaries. Influences from the earliest times have fed into the main river, been absorbed, and become an integral part of the great river. Empires flourished and disappeared, to be followed by other empires that flowered and faded. Different religions and philosophies also became a part of the river and conditioned the lives of the people. Since Indian architecture is a visual presentation of religious philosophy, this has greatly affected architectural design.

THE LAND

India's architecture has also been conditioned by the geography and climate of the country. This huge triangular mass projecting from central Asia is bounded on the north by the Himalayan Mountains, a wall stretching from Afghanistan in the west to Assam in the east. The main passes in this great natural barrier are in the northwest, and from the earliest times invading tribes have come through them. On the west of the peninsula is the Indian Ocean and on the east the Bay of Bengal. Traffic through the northwest passes has been largely one-way into India, which has absorbed the various racial groups that started arriving in prehistoric times and continued to come for thousands of years.

India falls into four geographical divisions that have resulted from its river systems. The northwest, dominated by the Indus River and its four tributaries, is called the Punjab (land of five rivers). South of this area is Sind, which takes its name from the Vedic word Sindhu (Indus). Another great river system of India is the sacred Ganges and its tributaries, which flow for more than a thousand miles through northeastern India. This area is often called the heart of India, and many of India's great cities were built and flourished here.

South of the Ganges plain are the Vindhya Mountains, which define the northern boundary of the Deccan, a high, arid plateau. The Deccan is partially cut off from the Indian Ocean by coastal mountains called the Western Ghāts and from the Bay of Bengal by a similar mountain chain called the Eastern Ghāts. Most of the rivers of this area flow easterly into the Bay of Bengal. The name Deccan, which means southland, usually refers to the northern and central sections of India's peninsula. The southernmost area of the peninsula is Tamil country, which consists of plains watered by the Pennār and Kāferī rivers.[1]

THE CLIMATE

The most important element of Indian climate is the monsoon, rain-bearing clouds that blow across the land from the Indian Ocean, starting in late spring and continuing into October. Peninsular India is particularly dependent on the monsoon, for the rivers of this region are not fed by mountain glaciers such as those in the Himalayas. During a five-thousand-year period climate may change. Some scholars believe it did change in central Asia and northwest India, which may have contributed to the collapse of the Indus Valley civilization. On the basis of later research, however, other scholars disagree with this assessment.[2] It has often been said that the overwhelming power of India's dry, scorching heat and torrential downpours has greatly influenced the character and philosophy of the Indians, tending to make them introspective and a bit fatalistic.

THE PEOPLE

Evidence shows that human beings inhabited India from a very early period. Both Paleolithic and Neolithic remains have been found in far-separated parts of India.[3] It is generally believed that the earliest inhabitants of India were a dark Negrito race that was soon mixed with diverse invading tribes such as proto-Australian, Asiatic, Mongoloid, and Armenoid peoples. The race resulting from this mixture came to be known as the Dravidians and were responsible for the pre-Aryan culture of India.[4] Although before 1920 we had no exact knowledge of the pre-Aryan civilization of India, we know now that in the third millennium B.C. the Indus Valley supported a civilization that was comparable in many respects to those of Egypt and Mesopotamia. Excavations started in 1922 uncovered the ancient cities of Harappa in the Punjab, Mohanjo-daro (city of the dead) in Sind, and later the port city of Lothal in Kathiawar. These cities reveal a fully developed civilization that was already Indian in many ways.[5] Since the discovery of the Indus Valley civilization much work has been done. The terms *Harappa* (the city first discovered) and *Indus* both refer to this civilization. I prefer *Indus* because it more easily identifies the area. Large areas have been excavated to reveal hundreds of village sites scattered over an area of 1.3 million square kilometers, roughly the size of France.[6] The number of art objects found at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa has been very small, a few statuettes and figurines and a number of seals that are of outstanding quality. The statuettes, though very small, seem to give life to the material, and the animals on the seals are beautifully molded and unified in design—the work of ancient artists with the ability to suggest living creatures. Later excavations have revealed that the Indus Valley people loved personal ornaments. They adorned themselves with necklaces, earrings, bracelets, headbands, and waistbands made from gold, silver, copper, semiprecious stones, steatite, shells, and clay. Beads of all shapes and sizes were found in nearly all village and town excavations, some of them very elegant and sophisticated.[7] What caused the collapse of the Indus Valley civilization is a matter of conjecture. Possibly it was a series of natural or internal causes combined with invasions from the northwest. Whatever the reason, we know that around 1500 B.C. foreigners invaded northwest India, bringing with them a new way of life, a new religion, and a new language—Sanskrit. These invaders spoke of themselves as *Āryas* (kinsmen) and became known as *Aryans*. Their conquest of India was not a single, massive attack, but may have taken centuries and probably involved many different tribes. Their literature calls the inhabitants of India *dasyu* (slaves), but it also describes them as living in cities and castles. Some historians point out that the Aryan arrival in India was actually one of barbarians entering a highly organized society that had existed for hundreds of years. The Indus Valley inhabitants were no match for the Aryan warrior and his superior armaments, nor could they easily accept the Aryan herdsman's culture, which was so different from their own.[8]

About 1400 B.C. the Indus Valley civilization collapsed, but as the years passed and the impact of the conquest faded, a characteristic arose that appears throughout Indian history—the ability to accept and absorb new conditions so that ultimately the defeated gain the final victory. Aryan culture greatly influenced Indian civilization, but as centuries passed, aspects of the old Dravidian culture reappeared as part of Indian culture. The civilization that existed until the Muslim conquest was primarily a synthesis of these two ancient cultures.[9]

THE RELIGION

The religion of the Indus Valley people was based on devotion to procreative deities. Their principal gods seem to have been a mother goddess, possibly a Śiva prototype, and male and female nature deities. The large-breasted, broad-hipped *yakshī* (female tree spirit) of Buddhist and Hindu iconography probably derived from this early Dravidian culture. It is possible that this early civilization is the source of some of the traditions prevalent in India today, and that modern Hinduism has elements handed down from the Indus Valley religion. Unfortunately the script (if it is a script) of these ancient people has never been deciphered, but if a Rosetta Stone is ever found, many unsolved questions may be answered.

The era from the end of the Indus Valley civilization to the beginning of the first Indian empire includes the Vedic period (c. 1400-500 B.C.)—a span of approximately one thousand years that remains an architectural void. However, during this time the great religions of India were born. This was the age of the Vedas, the Brāhmanas, and the Upanishads. The Vedic period saw the development of a strong and vital civilization—a society based on the caste system and a religion that has been followed through the

centuries. The invading Aryans became the ruling class, and when they settled among the darker-skinned inhabitants, they created definite class distinctions. The four classes were the priest *(brahmin)*, warrior *(kshatriya)*, peasant *(vaiśya)*, and serf *(sudra)*.

The Vedic hymns (collected in four books: *Rig-Veda*, *Yajur-Veda*, *Sama-Veda*, and *Atharva-Veda*) were probably composed between 1400–900 B.C. *Veda* means "wisdom" and the orthodox Hindu regards the Vedas as timeless and sacred. Attached to the Vedas are the Brāhmanas, which are long prose instructions about ritual. Even before the Brāhmanas were completed the Upanishads were being written. The influence of this mystical religious philosophy, the last of India's religious literature, culminated at the time of Gautama the Buddha and Mahāvīra the Jina in the sixth century B.C. Also dating from this early period are India's great epic poems, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, both of which are considered part of religious literature.

Among the various deities of the Vedic pantheon (never clearly anthropomorphized) were a god of fire (Agni), a god of the sun (Surya), a god of wind and destruction (Rudra), and a supreme god of sky and storms (Indra)—all four connected with the skies. As time passed these and other lesser Aryan deities were superseded by a gradual change to the Hindu pantheon with its Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Śiva, which represents God in his position as creator, preserver, and destroyer. Lesser deities, *gandhārvas*, *apsarases*, *vidyādharas*, *yakshas* and *yakshīs*, and *nāgas* and *nāginīs*, were also worshiped by different groups. The complicated Hindu pantheon is difficult for a Westerner to understand, but it might be more comprehensible if we accept the idea that all these deities are different aspects of one Supreme Being.

The Hindu religion, based on sacrificial ritual, had developed into a religion with a powerful and autocratic class of priests. By the sixth century B.C. conditions called for reform. Many of the traditional beliefs were being rejected. Life was now viewed as evil and a devotee's chief concern was to find release. Also developing at that time was a belief in a world soul, *Ātmā*, of which all human souls were a part. From the Upanishads appear two basic concepts: transmigration of the soul and the law of action and reaction. Every action carries with it a counteraction that may appear in this existence or the next one. Death is simply the passage to a new existence, and the quality of that existence results from one's previous conduct. As the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad states, "Just as he acts, just as he behaves, so he becomes."[10] This last development of the Hindu religion was called *karma*, and from this time on the doctrines of karma and transmigration were found in all Indian religions.

The religious devotees were trying to find an escape from the never-ending cycle of death and rebirth. Many found a solution in asceticism and meditation. The highest form of meditation was gained through *yoga* (union), which was a method of "yoking" the mind to gain complete control of the body through intense concentration. The final goal of ascetics was total understanding of the universe and themselves. One's innermost self, Ātmā, and the Universal Being, Brahma, from which the world emerged, were one. Brahma was the human soul, and when devotees realized this supreme knowledge they were released from transmigration and their souls became a part of the world soul. The concept of union with a Universal Being became an important aspect of later iconography.

More than an attempt to escape from reality, asceticism was a search for knowledge and an understanding of the mysteries of the universe. Some small comprehension of the ascetic's struggle is suggested by a poem describing a hermit ascetic:

> Bescorched, befrozen, lone in fearsome woods
> Naked, without a fire, afire within
> Struggled, in awful silence, toward the goal.[11]

All the religious thought of the period was becoming concerned with the origin of the universe and the nature of the soul. It was at this time that two religious reformers were born—Gautama the Buddha, and Mahāvīra the Jina. They lived at a time of explosive intellectual and philosophical turmoil in a country bursting with ethical theories.[12]

According to tradition the backgrounds of these two great teachers were somewhat similar. Both belonged to the *kshatriya* or warrior caste; both were educated as princes, were married, and around the age of thirty left their families to seek salvation. Although some Western scholars attribute the founding of Jainism to Mahāvīra, the Jain religion teaches that Mahāvīra was the twenty-fourth *tīrthaṅkara* (savior) or *jina* (conqueror)—not the first. However, there is no doubt that he lived during the time of the Buddha

and was a leader in the revolt against orthodox Hinduism and its tyrannical brahmins. After having lived twelve years as an ascetic (subjecting his body to severe conditions, meditating, and discussing), Mahāvīra achieved Enlightenment. He is said to have worn one garment for thirteen months and then to have removed it, remaining nude for the rest of his life—a legend that is reflected in some Jain sculpture.

One of the basic concepts of Jainism is that the world operates according to universal law and not by the will of a personal deity. Jainism accepts the existence of the gods but gives them little importance. Salvation that results from asceticism and being careful never to kill or injure any living creature is a slow, tortuous process that many souls never achieve, with the result that they transmigrate forever.[13]

Mahāvīra's teachings were popular and some of his many followers were kings. He died at seventy-two from self-starvation. Although Jainism never achieved the popularity of Buddhism, it became firmly established in India and survives there today, while Buddhism does not.

More important than Mahāvīra in this religious revolt, particularly for Asia, was the teacher known as the Buddha. He renounced his royal heritage, put on a beggar's robe, and became a wandering ascetic. His search for salvation was finally achieved through the practice of yoga. His Enlightenment—and the attainment of buddhahood or illumination—came while he was sitting in profound meditation under a *pīpal* tree at Gayā. For the next forty-six years he traveled throughout Kosala and Magadha, preaching his doctrine of salvation. The Buddha, deeply influenced by the pessimism of his time, considered all existence as sorrow from which there must be a way to escape. He taught that what exists after death is not Ātmā or Ego, but karma, the result of our deeds. It is karma that is reborn. By following the Eightfold Path, one achieves release from karma.[14] When release has been achieved, nothing is left to be reborn, and this is *Nirvāna*. Although he accepted the Hindu deities, the Buddha considered them little different from human beings and also in need of salvation. Karma was the controlling force; sacrifice and prayer were meaningless. His basic philosophy was "As you sow, so shall you also reap." Such a doctrine was easily understood, and salvation was possible for all, regardless of social status or religious beliefs.

Major events in the life of the Buddha—his birth, renunciation, illumination, first sermon, and death—are important inspirations for Buddhist art. The Emperor Aśoka's conversion to Buddhism and use of it to hold his empire together spread the new religion throughout India. The Buddha's missionary work in other parts of Asia carried it still farther. What had started as a personal ethical system finally became a world religion. Early in the first century A.D. new concepts appeared in Buddhist doctrine and caused a division in the order. One group became known as the *Mahāyāna*, or Great Vehicle, and the other more orthodox group as the *Hināyāna*, or Lesser Vehicle. Both groups still exist, and Buddhism is now a religion practiced in many Asian countries. Although Buddhism has practically disappeared from the land that gave it birth, its art lives on in India in the form of religious shrines for devout pilgrims from other lands and also as great art for all of humanity.

The Hindu religion, which had existed along with Buddhism, also exerted a strong influence on the Mahāyāna church. When salvation finally became possible by a monk's reciting magical rituals, the Great Vehicle had made a complete about-face and was back to the old Hindu concepts. Gradually the Hindu gods, disguised as different powers of the Buddha, became part of Buddhism. In North India the Hindus claimed the Buddha as the ninth incarnation of Vishnu. Buddhism had become another Hindu sect. However, the centuries that saw the decline of Buddhism in India also saw a rejuvenated Hinduism. Hinduism, with its tolerance and steadfast ability to assimilate rather than attack, became the religion adopted by India: today the word *Hindu* is practically synonymous with the word *India*.

1
Early Indian Architecture

THE STUPA

THE EARLIEST INDIAN ARCHITECTURE THAT SURVIVES TODAY IS PRIMARILY BUDDHIST, A FACT RESULTING from two events occurring at the same time—the Emperor Aśoka's conversion to Buddhism and the introduction of stone as a building material. Before this time significant buildings had existed, but they were made of perishable materials. One of the surviving architectural forms is the stupa, a hemispherical dome of earth and brick that was originally a simple burial mound. During the lifetime of the Buddha, it was common practice to raise mounds of earth over the remains of both holy men and those of noble rank. According to Buddhist texts, the ashes of the Buddha were deposited in eight stupas. Aśoka is said to have further divided these ashes and erected stupas over them in all the large towns of his domain. The stupa's core was usually unfired brick and its exterior fired brick covered with a thick coat of plaster. In the center of these early Buddhist shrines was placed a carved casket, possibly of crystal, containing body relics of the Buddha. At the top of the stupa was an umbrella crown of wood or stone, around which was a small square railing. The stupa itself was surrounded with a large railing that enclosed an ambulatory path.

Aśoka's use of Buddhism as a political device to help unify his empire was probably responsible for the stupa-worship concept. Although the first stupas contained body relics of the Buddha, the emphasis gradually shifted from the objects within to the form itself. The stupa became a symbol of Buddha's divinity, the emblem of Enlightenment and Nirvāna.

To ornament his architectural forms, the artist of ancient India worked in low-relief carving. He seems to have designed his work to take advantage of the strong dark and light contrasts resulting from the brilliant sunshine. The combination of molded edges, dark shadows, and strong highlights creates the illusion of three-dimensional form in space; thus, even in low-relief carving ornament tends to be plastic rather than linear.

Early Buddhist art never personifies the Buddha but uses symbols such as an empty throne, a tree, a riderless horse, a wheel, a stupa, or simply footprints to indicate his presence. The themes most often repeated from the Buddha's life are the Four Great Miracles: his birth, Enlightenment, the First Sermon, and death. The birth may be represented simply by a single lotus blossom, several lotus blossoms in a vase, or by his mother, Māyā, being approached by a white elephant. The Enlightenment is depicted by an empty throne under a pīpal tree, or by the tree decorated with garlands and umbrellas to show its sanctity. The First Sermon was given in the Deer Park near Sārnāth, which is often represented by two or more deer. The Buddha's death is symbolized by a stupa, usually surrounded by worshipers.

The ornamental carving of early Buddhism includes, in addition to episodes from the Buddha's life, stories from the Jātaka legends (tales of previous incarnations of the Buddha). In these legends the Bodhisattva (Buddha-to-be), whether in the form of an animal or human being, performs great feats and leads a life dedicated to serving others. Also represented are Hindu celestial beings, *yaksha* and *yakshī* figures (male and female tree spirits), flying *gandharvas* (musicians of the gods), and *nāgas* and *nagīnīs* (male and female serpent gods or sea spirits)—all borrowed from existing iconography. Although the stories told in early Buddhist carving revolve around the life of the Buddha, the Indian sculptor has also shown us the world he lived in and knew well.

Between the Maurya and Gupta dynasties was a period of extensive Buddhist construction, during which time many of Aśoka's stupas were enlarged. Examples from this period have been found at Bharhut and Sāñchī in central India and at Amarāvāti and Nāgārjunakonda in South India, but only the Sāñchī

stupas survive in a relatively well-preserved condition. To me the Great Stupa of Sāñchī is one of the most striking monuments of India.

Sāñchī

1. Stupa 2, general view, Sāñchī (second century B.C.)

Stupa 2, the oldest existing monument at Sāñchī, has no torana. However, its railing is ornamented with low-relief carvings that are among the earliest existing examples of indigenous architectural ornament.[1] This work was done when both stone carving and the Buddhist religion were relatively new, at a time when the craftsman was still conditioned by his work in wood and ivory but was actually working in stone, and when Buddhist iconography was just starting to develop.

2. Stupa 2, railing section

This plate shows an outside section of the balustrade that encloses the ambulatory path and the medallion carvings that ornament the posts of the railing. At the far right is one of the four entrance areas.

3. Stupa 1, general view, Sāñchī (first century B.C.—early first century A.D.)

The core of the Great Stupa of Sāñchī was probably built by Aśoka (c. 273–236 B.C.) and later enlarged and beautified through gifts from generous Buddhist devotees. The dome, faced with dressed stone laid in regular courses, is approximately 54 feet high by 120 feet in diameter. At its base is a processional path enclosed by a massive stone railing *(vedikā)* eleven feet high.[2] A smaller railing surrounds a terrace sixteen feet above the ground that provides a second ambulatory; and at the top of the dome a third railing *(harmikā)*, square in shape, encloses a stone umbrella. The four gateways *(toranas)*, placed at the cardinal points of the compass, are thirty-four feet high and richly ornamented. The exact dates for the building of the Great Stupa are not known, but scholars generally agree that it was built in several stages, the last one adding the four toranas, probably in the first century A.D.[3]

The Sāñchī site has a building history of more than one thousand years, starting with the stupas of the third century B.C. and concluding with a series of temples and monasteries, now in ruins, that were built in the tenth or eleventh centuries. In the thirteenth century Sāñchī was abandoned and the jungle quickly moved in. The city of Bhilsā, which had replaced the ancient city of Videshā, was sacked three times by Muslim conquerors and its temples again destroyed by Aurangzeb. Sāñchī, on a hill only five miles away, somehow managed to escape all this destruction so that when it was rediscovered in 1818 by a General Taylor, he found it in good condition. Three of the large gateways were still standing and the southern one was lying where it had fallen. The domes of three stupas were undamaged and there were remains of eight minor stupas. News of the Sāñchī monuments brought various treasure-hunters, all of whom did some damage, but it was a Captain Johnson, assistant political agent in Bhopal, who in 1822 opened the Great Stupa from top to bottom, almost causing its collapse. In 1881 the government undertook a restoration program but it was not until between 1912 and 1919 that the major restoration of the area was successfully undertaken, by Sir John Marshall, director general of archaeology in India.[4]

4. Stupa 2, pillars at the north entrance areas

Since the right pillar forms part of an entrance area, it has more ornament than other pillars of the balustrade. The top panel represents the First Sermon, or the Turning of the Wheel of the Law. On each side of the column are lotus *(padma)* designs. In the lower section is a lotus tree, the Tree of Life. The design of the left pillar uses the lotus blossom motif, a symbol of divine birth.[5]

5. Stupa 2, pillar detail

This detail from an entrance pillar symbolizes the Enlightenment. A garlanded tree with an umbrella (representing the Buddha) grows from a throne. At either side of the umbrella are worshiping gandharvas.

6. Stupa 2, entrance pillar

The two lotus trees, springing from the elephant at the bottom of the panel, form three circles between which are two pairs of Indian geese *(haṁsas)*. At the top the two stalks end in lotus buds and frame two tree spirits.

7–11. Stupa 2, railing medallions

All five medallions are designs from railing posts and are typical of the more than five hundred medallions, half-medallions, and panels ornamenting the ground balustrade of Stupa 2. Although the carving is very low-relief, it creates the illusion of deeper space and three-dimensional form.

12. Stupa 1, south gateway, Sāñchī (early first century A.D.)

This gateway was the first of four to be erected and was followed by those in the north, east, and west, respectively. They were finished in a relatively short time, a fact established from inscriptions indicating that the same donors contributed to both the first and last gates. All four are of similar design and construction. They are elaborately ornamented with low-relief carvings representing scenes from the Buddha's life, stories from the Jātaka legends, tree spirits, various animals, and floral designs. This view of the south gateway, the oldest and most damaged of the four, also shows the stairs that lead to the raised ambulatory. When this gate was restored in the nineteenth century, both the top and bottom crossbeams were reversed, with the result that a story intended for all four front façades (the Seven Last Lives of the Buddha or the Manushi Buddhas) now faces in.[6] The uncarved portions are restorations. The ground railing has no decoration, but the one enclosing the raised ambulatory is similar in design to that of Stupa 2.

13–15. Stupa 1, south gateway, details of front face

Plate 13 shows the dies and part of the architraves on the left side of the gate. The top die symbolizes the Buddha's Enlightenment, the false capital of the middle architrave shows a pair of horses, the die below symbolizes the Buddha's death, and the bottom pair of riders are jungle dwellers on goats. Plate 14 is from the top left pillar. The top panel represents the First Sermon. Note the deer, indicating the Deer Park near Sārnāth. It is interesting to compare the design and workmanship of this panel with the earlier work of Stupa 2. The second panel probably represents Aśoka in his chariot, and the last panel shows various deities mounted and on foot, hurrying to pay tribute to the Bodhisattva.

The lion capital of the southern gateway (pl. 15) was undoubtedly influenced by an Aśokan pillar that stood a few feet from this entrance. Many art historians stress the inferiority of these lions to those of the handsome Aśokan capital at Sārnāth. They are indeed different—stiffer, cruder, and less polished—but they also have a strength and simplicity that seems particularly appropriate for a capital supporting three massive crossbeams.

16. Stupa 1, back face of south gateway

The top center panel represents the Seven Last Lives of the Buddha—four pīpal trees and three stupas. The center panel is basically decorative but tells a story of the Buddha's rebirth in the form of a six-tusked elephant. The bottom crossbeam relates the story of the War of the Relics.

17. Stupa 1, back face of south gateway

The scene at the top left depicts the Departure. The town of Kapilavastu is represented by a single gateway. The horse is riderless, and the umbrella and fly-whisk (symbols of royalty) float above the horse's back. The groom carries a ewer (a third symbol of royalty). The false capital shows two typical humpbacked bulls with riders, and the die symbolizes the Buddha's birth.

18. Stupa 1, north gateway, front face

The north gate is the best preserved of the four and is the only one having nearly all its ornament in place. The top and center crossbeams repeat the story of the Seven Last Lives of the Buddha (the top one using tumuli and trees, the middle only trees). The bottom crossbeam represents the rebirth of the Buddha under the name of Vishvantara, the Prince of Charity.

19. Stupa 1, east pillar of north gateway, inside face

On the lowest panel of the inside face is a guardian *(dvārpāla)* holding a bignonia flower from the tree on his right. The panel above shows a king and his wives at the Buddha's throne. Above this is a royal procession, and the top panel probably portrays Indra's visit to the Buddha.

20. Stupa 1, north gateway, west pillar detail

The outside face on all the pillars of the four gates are primarily decorative floral designs. This composition consists of various lotus forms, ducks, and nymphs.

21. Stupa 1, back face of north gateway

An often-repeated story of Sāñchī is that of the Buddha's reincarnation as a six-tusked elephant. This is the subject of the top crossbeam. The middle crossbeam tells the story of Mārā, god of the Sixth Heaven, and his army of demons. The Buddha, represented by the Bodhi (Enlightenment) Tree on the left, is about to receive a bowl of rice—his last food before his Enlightenment. Mārā (the Satan of Buddhism), seated on his throne near the center and surrounded by demons, has begun to fear that the Buddha may succeed in destroying his kingdom. The bottom crossbeam continues the Jātaka story of the reverse side, Buddha as Vishvantara, the Prince of Charity.

22. Stupa 1, west capital and back face of north gateway

The capital design of the north gate is more elaborate than that of the south gate. The elephants are adorned with hoods and saddle cloths with hanging bells. The underside of the bottom crossbeam has a handsome design of different lotus forms.

23. Stupa 1, north gateway, capital detail

This view of the elephant capital suggests a sense of tremendous power and strength, qualities necessary to carry the weight of the three great crossbeams resting on their backs.

24–26. Stupa 1, north gateway, back face details

Plate 24 shows the false capital from the left side of plate 21, on which are two jungle dwellers riding a pair of goats. On the die below them is a female figure seated on a lotus, and above her are two elephants pouring water over her head. According to Buddhist legend, when the Buddha was born two nāgas sprinkled water over his mother, Queen Māyā. Some scholars have assumed that this panel represents the Buddha's birth, but since this is a common pose of Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess, other scholars think it was an existing design borrowed by the Buddhists.[7]

The peacocks on the Sāñchī gates are probably purely decorative but may refer to the heraldic emblem of the Maurya dynasty. The false capital shows two goats with riders, holding switches in their hands and wearing the typical headdress of jungle dwellers. The design on the die is a bowl of lotus flowers.

The yaksha figure of plate 26 holds a fly-whisk in his right hand and a dhoti folded to form an Indian purse in his left. To his left is an excellent example of a *triratna* (trident), which symbolizes the Buddha, the Law, and the Order. The false capital below the triratna shows two winged antelopes under a very stylized bignonia tree.

27. Stupa 1, east gateway

The east gate at Sāñchī is considered by many art historians as the finest of the four. The following details clearly show how skillfully the ancient craftsmen used dark and light in their low-relief carvings.

28–30. Stupa 1, east gateway, north pillar details

The front face of the north pillar (pl. 28) represents the six inferior heavens of the gods *(devalokas)*. Each of the six heavens is represented as if it were a story in a palatial building. Here are four of the six stories. The small panel at the top shows the lowest of the higher heavens.

The inside face of the north pillar (pl. 29) represents Kapilavastu, the city where the Buddha was born. The top panel shows the gods requesting the Buddha to teach the world. Immediately below that is a short panel called The Dream of Māyā (the Buddha's mother) or The Conception of the Bodhisattva. Below that is a royal procession on its way to greet the returning savior.

The surface of the outside face of the north pillar (pl. 30) is divided into three sections. The center panel of lotus blossoms is framed on either side by twining lotus vines, flowers, leaves, and buds.

31–33. Stupa 1, east gateway, south pillar details

A dvārpāla appears in the bottom panels on the inside faces of the Sāñchī gates (pl. 31). They are all rather similar.

The decorative panel on the outside face (pl. 32) balances its counterpart, shown in plate 30. Plate 33 depicts King Bimbisara and his royal attendants leaving the town of Rājagriha to visit the Buddha (lowest panel, front face).

34–36. Stupa 1, east gateway, capital and triratna details

Two of the Sāñchī gates—the north and east—have elephant capitals. Many art critics consider the east gate capital (pl. 34) superior to that of the north gate. They are indeed handsome, with their curved, rhythmical lines, but to this observer they do not convey the sense of great strength and stability that is so apparent in the north gate capitals (pl. 23).

Plate 35 shows the reverse side of plate 34's capital. Unfortunately the two elephants are more damaged than those on the front face, but the character and quality of the stone is clearly visible.

The false capital in the top crossbeam of plate 36 repeats the motif of a pair of riders—this time on the backs of lions. On the triratna is an inscription that reads, "the gift of Jiva."

37. Stupa 1, east gateway, yakshī bracket

This bracket, the only one still in place and undamaged, is probably the most famous figure at Sāñchī. Her transparent dhoti falls in pleated folds at her side and at the back is drawn up between her legs. She wears bangles on her arms and legs, and her hair forms a topknot on her head. Her arms, which hold on to the branches of a mango tree, are perfectly placed in the composition. She makes a perfect bracket and is certainly a wonderful presentation of the tree spirit.

38. Stupa 1, west gateway

The west gate, knocked over by Captain Johnson's excavation work in 1822, was, like the south gate, incorrectly restored with the middle and lower architraves being replaced backwards. The capitals of the two pillars are composed of four Atlas-type dwarfs. All three crossbeams repeat themes used in the other gates: the top one tells the story of the Seven Last Lives of the Buddha, the middle one the First Sermon, and the bottom one the legend of the six-tusked elephant.

39–40. Stupa 1, west gateway, south pillar details

The top panel of the front face (pl. 39) tells the Mahākapi Jātaka story in which the Bodhisattva is born as a monkey ruler. His domain was near a great mango tree that stood by the Ganges. A neighboring king decided to drive the monkeys away from the mango tree, and to save his subjects the Bodhisattva formed a bridge over the river with his own body.[8] In the second panel the gods entreat the Buddha to show humanity the path to salvation. The bottom panel depicts Indra's visit to the Buddha. The figures in the foreground are worshiping deities.

The decorative panel on the outside face of the pillar (pl. 40) uses lotus forms and back-to-back animals—all springing from a central lotus stalk.

41–43. Stupa 1, center sections, west gateway, back face details

All three panels are taken from the center sections of the back face. After the Buddha's death his body relics were taken by the Mallas to Kusinagara. Plate 41 shows this event. The king of the Mallas is riding an elephant and carrying the relics on his head. Plate 42 tells the story of the War of the Relics. The seven rival claimants and their armies are about to lay siege to the city of Kusinagara. The bottom plate (43) represents the temptation of the Buddha. In the center is the temple of Bodh-Gayā with the pīpal tree and throne of the Buddha. Sir John Marshall has pointed out that Bodh-Gayā was built by the Emperor Aśoka, and in this scene is an anachronism.[9] To the right of the temple are the retreating armies of Mārā and on the left the worshiping gods celebrating the Buddha's victory over evil.

44–45. Stupa 1, west gateway, back face details

The representation on the die symbolizes the Buddha's death or *parinirvāna* (final entry into Nirvāna). The stupa is being decorated with garlands by both celestial and earthly beings. The false capital below repeats a winged lion motif with riders.

The top false capital of plate 45 shows a pair of winged lions with antlers, and the riders are jungle dwellers carrying whips. The design on the die repeats the First Sermon, and the bottom false capital uses the motif of the back-to-back winged lions with a third lion's head and paws separating them.

46. Stupa 3, south side, Sāñchī (first century A.D.)

Stupa 3 is located about fifty yards from the Great Stupa. When Sir Alexander Cunningham opened it in 1851 he found two relic caskets containing body fragments of two of the Buddha's disciples. It is generally assumed that these relics were transferred from an earlier burial site at the time the Great Stupa was enlarged.

The design of Stupa 3 is very similar to that of the Great Stupa. However, it is much smaller and has only one gate, the last of the five to be erected. The seventeen-foot-high gate repeats similar motifs to those found on Stupa 1. Fragments of the ground balustrade indicate that it was about eight feet high and was ornamented.

1. Stupa 2, Sāñchī

2. Stupa 2, railing section

3. Stupa 1, Sāñchī

4. Stupa 2, pillars at north entrance areas

5. Stupa 2, pillar detail

6. Stupa 2, entrance pillar

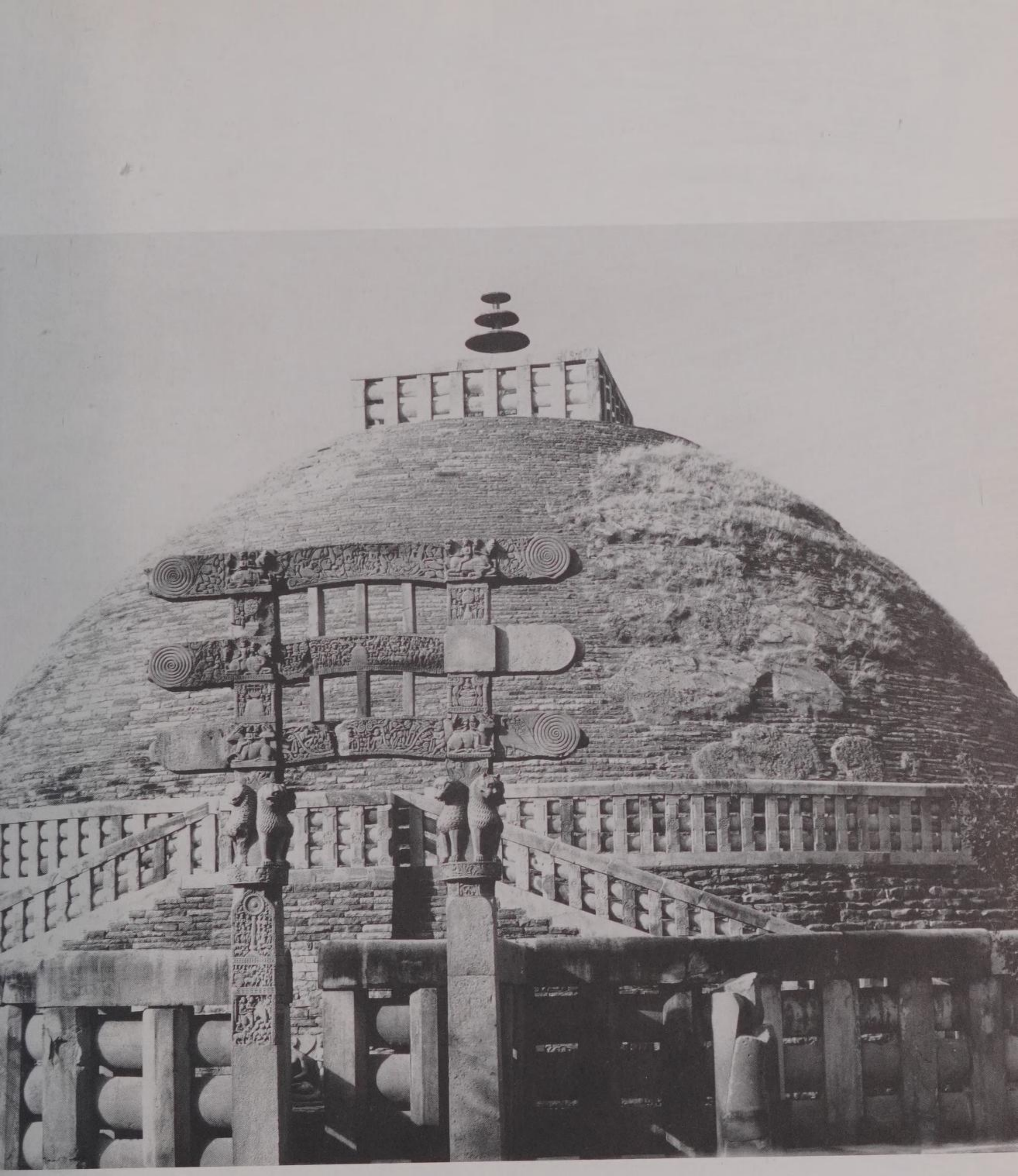
7. Stupa 2, railing medallion

8. Stupa 2, railing medallion

9. Stupa 2, railing medallion

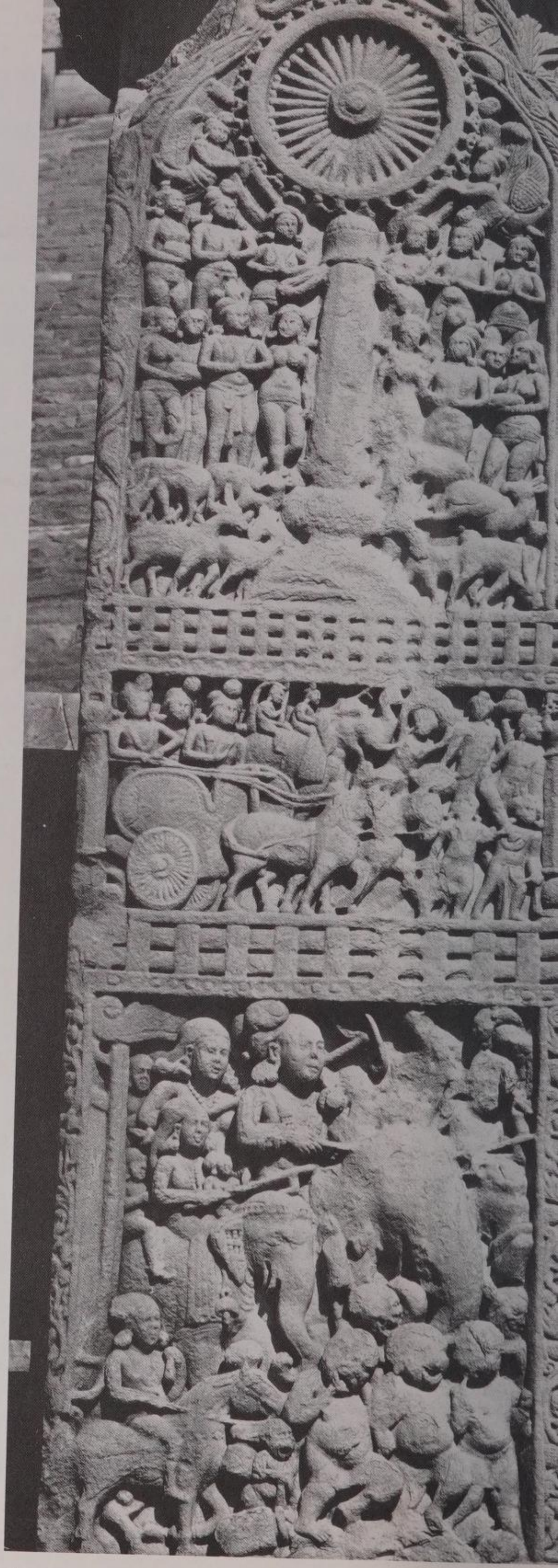
10. Stupa 2, railing medallion

11. Stupa 2, railing medallion



12. Stupa 1, south gateway

. Stupa 1, south gateway detail

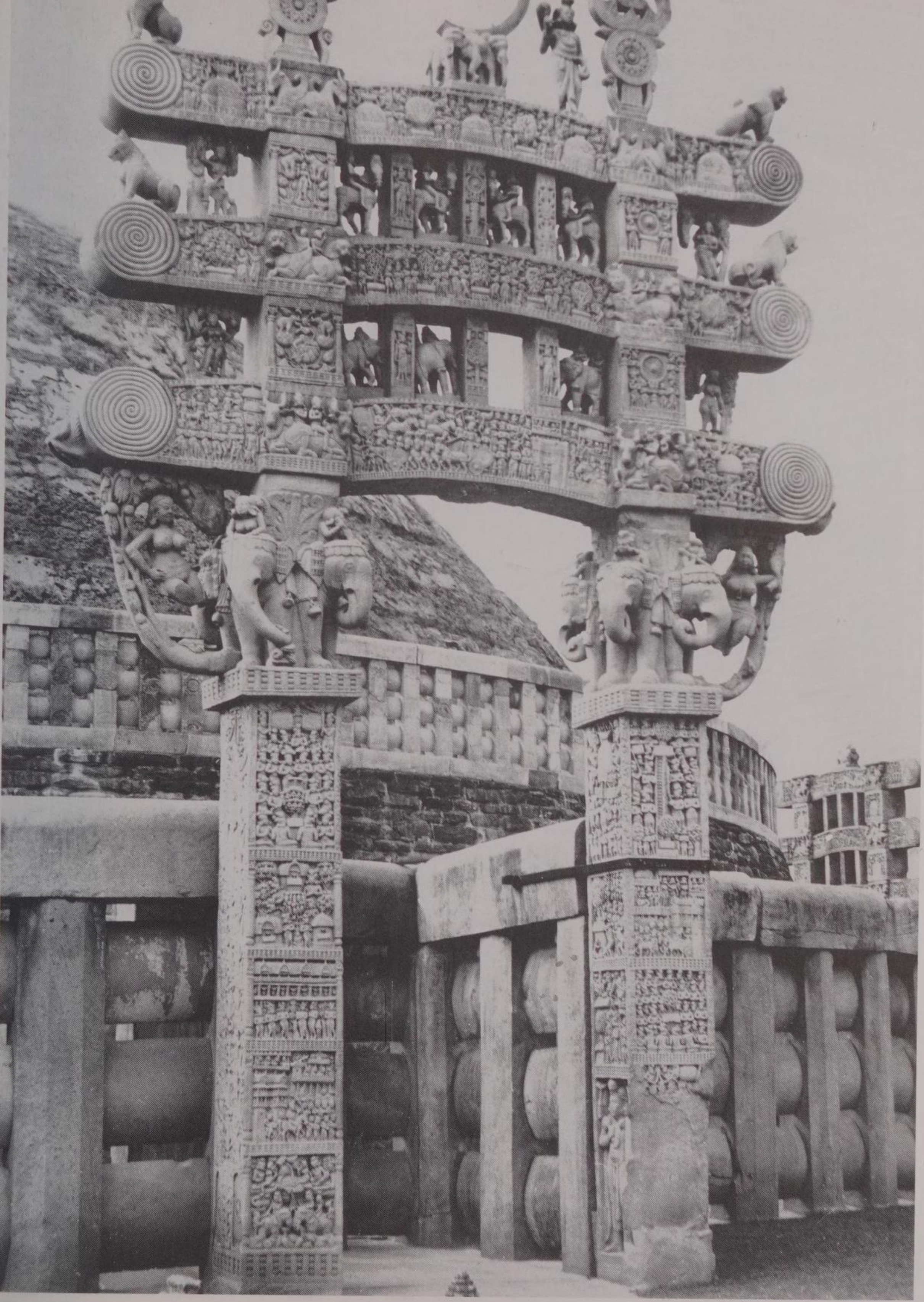


14. Stupa 1, south gateway detail

15. Stupa 1, south gateway detail

16. Stupa 1, south gateway, back face

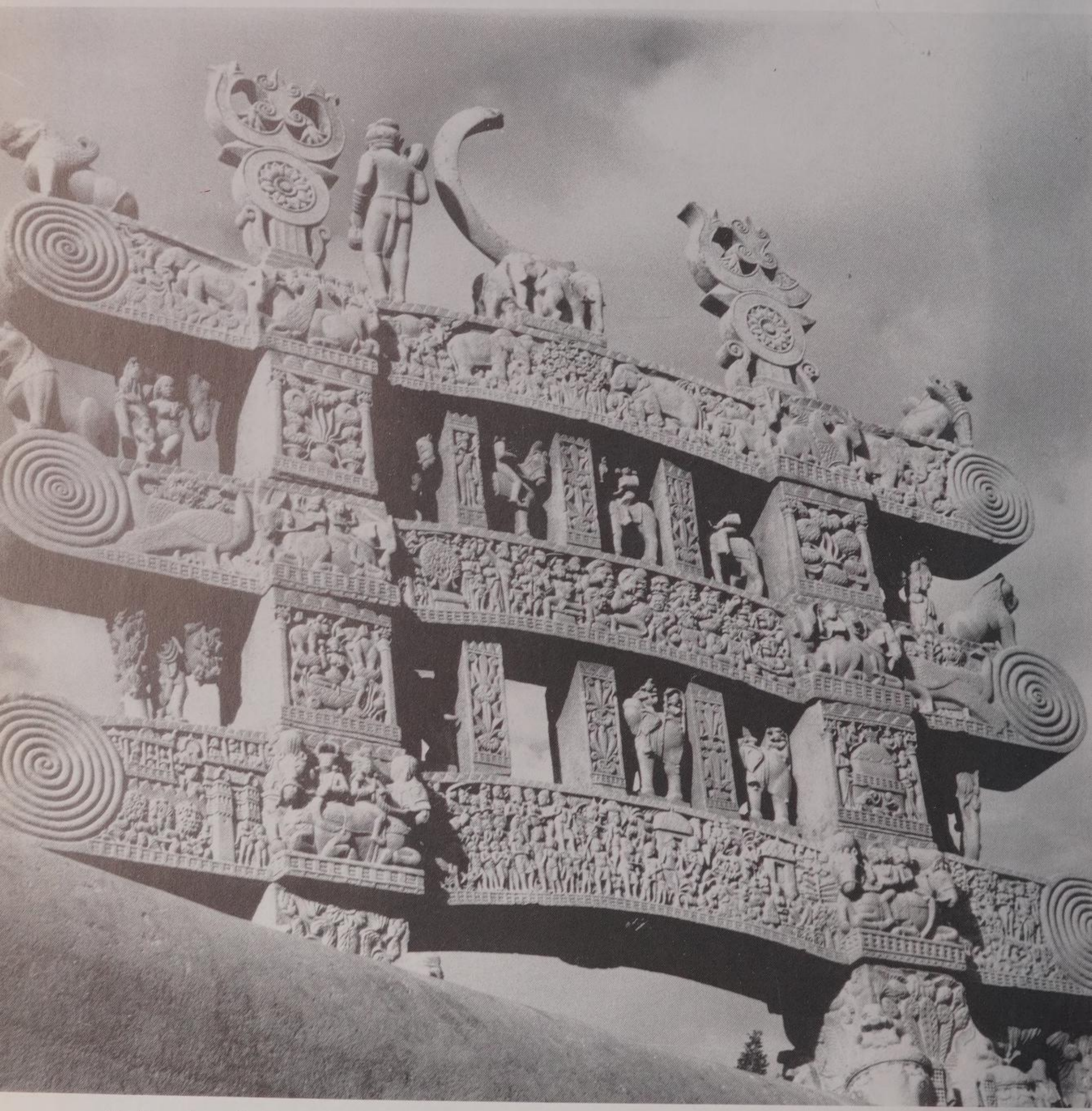
17. Stupa 1, south gateway, back face detail



8. Stupa 1, north gateway

19. Stupa 1, north gateway, east pillar

0. Stupa 1, north gateway, west pillar detail



21. Stupa 1, north gateway, back face

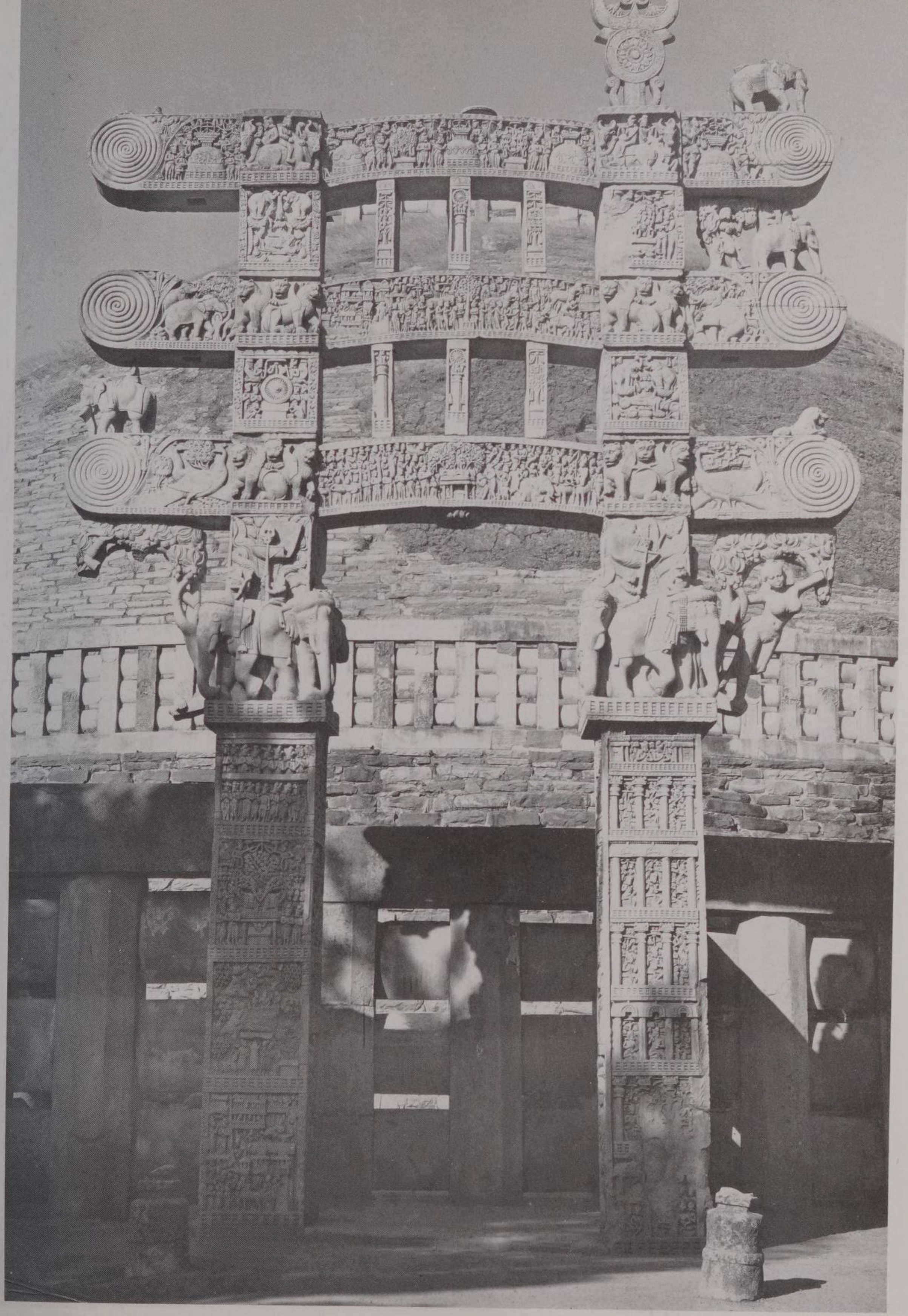
2. Stupa 1, north gateway, west capital and back face

23. Stupa 1, north gateway, capital detail

24. Stupa 1, north gateway, detail of back face

25. Stupa 1, north gateway, detail of back face

26. Stupa 1, north gateway, detail of back face



27. Stupa 1, east gateway

28. Stupa 1, east gateway, north pillar detail

29. Stupa 1, east gateway, north pillar detail

30. Stupa 1, east gateway, north pillar detail

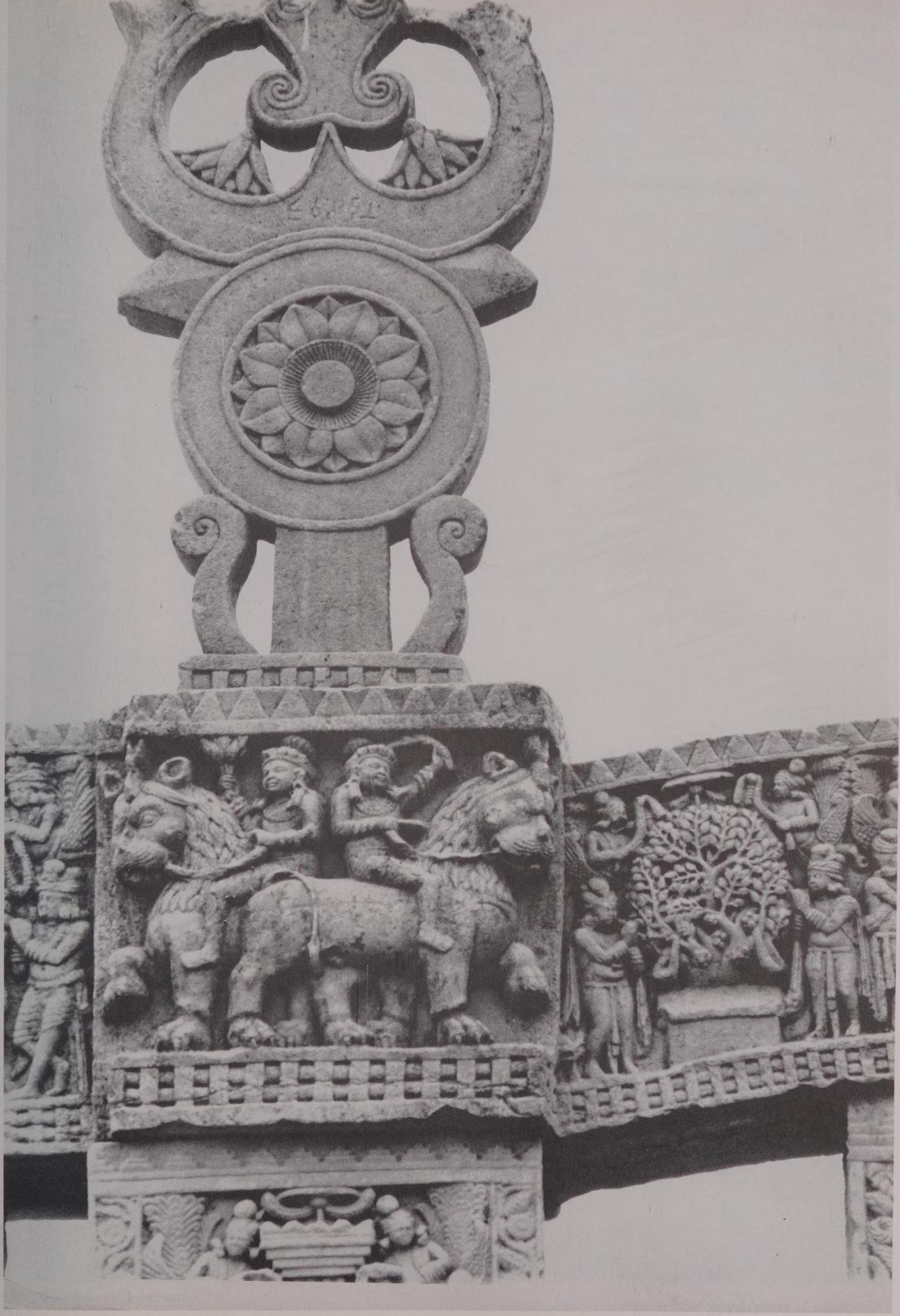
31. Stupa 1, east gateway, south pillar detail

32. Stupa I, east gateway, south pillar detail

33. Stupa 1, east gateway, south pillar detail

34. Stupa 1, east gateway, capital detail

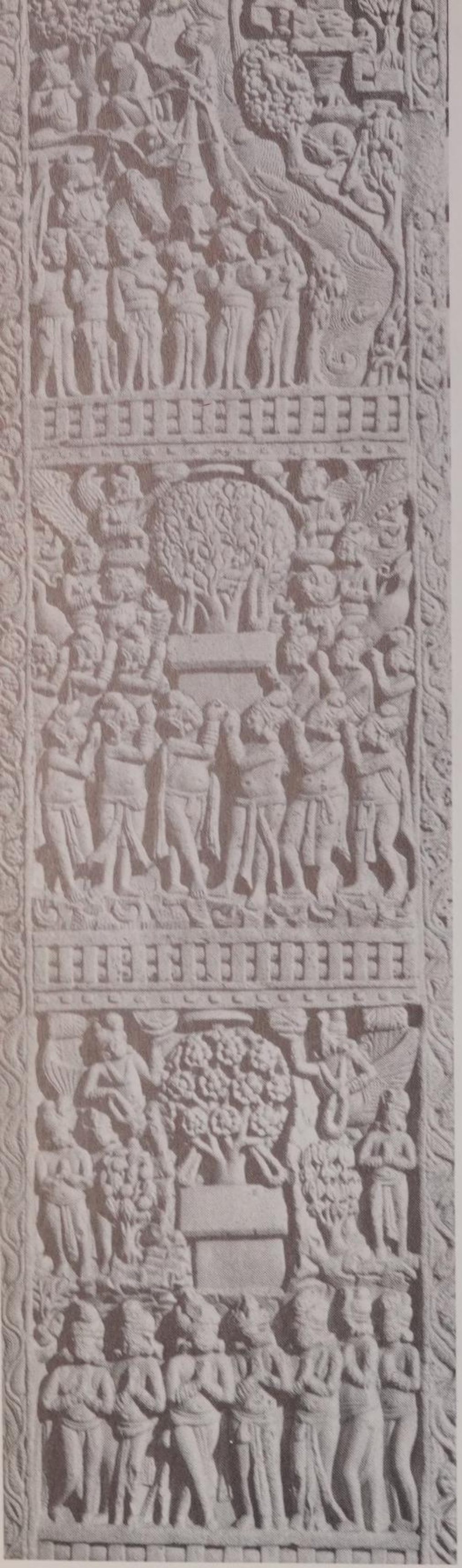
35. Stupa 1, east gateway, capital detail



36. Stupa 1, east gateway, false capital and triratna

37. Stupa 1, east gateway, yakshī bracket

38. Stupa 1, west gateway



39. Stupa 1, west gateway, south pillar detail

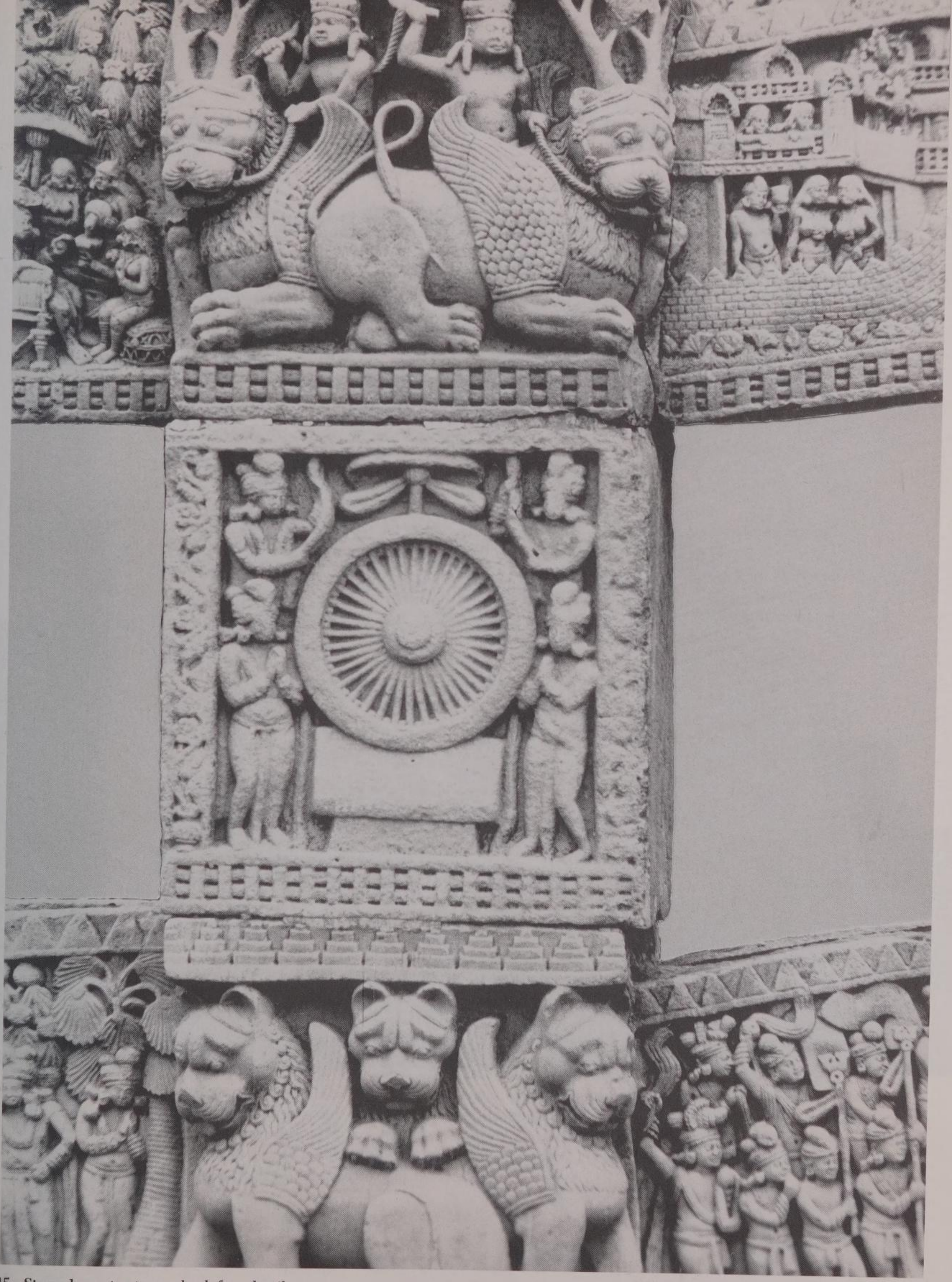
40. Stupa 1, west gateway, south pillar detail

41. Stupa 1, west gateway, center section, back face detail

42. Stupa 1, west gateway, center section, back face detail

43. Stupa 1, west gateway, center section, back face detail

44. Stupa 1, west gateway, back face detail



45. Stupa 1, west gateway, back face detail

46. Stupa 3, Sāñchī

EARLY ROCK-CUT CAVE ARCHITECTURE

Rock-cut cave architecture in India was first produced after the invasion of Alexander the Great had brought new contacts with western Asia. Although Indian caves do not resemble those in Persia or Asia Minor, they probably borrowed from some of them the idea of making the façade of the cave represent an actual building.[10] The Indian cave temple, cut from live rock, is undoubtedly a faithful reproduction of then-existing wooden structures.

The Buddhists, while building their stupas, were also producing rock-cut architecture—monastic compounds with large halls and individual cells that suited their religious needs. However, the Buddhists had no monopoly on rock-cut architecture. In fact, the Jains may have been the first to excavate caves: some of the oldest ruins (c. 100 B.C.) are Jain sanctuaries, and there is no doubt that they continued to develop caves later than either the Buddhists or Hindus. Jain shrines at Gwalier Fort are as late as the fifteenth century, but Hindu interest in excavated architecture was relatively short, with most of it completed between 500 and 800 A.D.

Much of the early Buddhist rock-cut architecture is located in the western Ghats within two hundred miles of Bombay. The caves are cut in vertical stone cliffs that face on ravines. Some unfinished excavations at Ajantā show the process used. After the vertical rock wall had been cleared and the design of the façade indicated, the work was started by boring into the rock face at the highest point of the design. The excavated rock was then removed through the opening in the façade as the work proceeded downward.[11] This method eliminated the need for scaffolding.

There are two types of rock-cut caves: the cave monastery *(vihāra)*, and the cave temple *(chaitya)*. The vihāra, a dwelling place for monks, consists of a series of small cells opening off a gallery or balcony, or off a rectangular room. The cave temple or chaitya-hall consists of a barrel-vaulted rectangle ending in a semicircle that curves to conform to the round stupa cut from the rock at the far end of the cave. Enough space is left between the stupa and the end of the cave to make a processional path to circumambulate the stupa. The nave is divided by two rows of pillars, one on either side, making a large center area and two small side aisles. The entrance façade includes a lower section with one or more entrances; above this is a great horseshoe arch which forms a window (sun window) that provides the main source of light. These early rock-cut sanctuaries were relatively simple and included no figurative representations of the Buddha, but after the schism in the Buddhist church, the Mahāyāna sect excavated shrines that were richly ornamented with both Bodhisattva and Buddha figures.

Cave temples are not constructed architecture, but they might be considered sculpture in which the artist was primarily concerned with negative space. However, if one accepts Frank Lloyd Wright's statement that the reality of the building is "the space within," then cave temples too must be architecture, for their very essence is inner space. It is not the soaring space of a Gothic cathedral, but an enveloping space—protecting and timeless—that is somehow related to the mysteries of the universe.

Bhājā

47. Chaitya-hall façade, Bhājā (early first century B.C.)

Bhājā, south of Bombay, is one of the oldest Buddhist shrines in the Western Ghats. The façade seen here originally had a wooden front that screened the lower section and included the entrance areas. Above this was probably a hanging balcony and a wooden grille in the arch to provide filtered light for the interior. Presumably the wood was ornamented in a way similar to the still-existing stone.[12] The ribs of the interior vault, which are clearly visible in this and the following plates, are also of wood. The architectural details obviously stem from wooden prototypes.

48. Chaitya-hall façade, detail

49. Chaitya-hall façade and interior

Although it is unfortunate that Bhājā's original wooden façade no longer exists, its absence allows the viewer to see very clearly and quickly the basic design of an early Buddhist chaitya-hall—the central nave, the high, vaulted ceiling, the two side aisles, and the stupa at the far end of the sanctuary. The angle of the stone columns indicates that this was an early excavation and that the workers were thinking in terms of wood construction.

50–51. Chaitya-hall façade and interior, details of plate 49

The badly damaged yakshī seen to the left of the arch is an early example of the ideal Indian female figure—large breasts, small waist, and broad hips—physical qualities associated with the fertility deities. Mortise holes that once secured the wood are clearly visible in the arch.

The chaitya-arch at Bhājā is flanked by a series of bracketed balconies, open pavilions, and projecting arched blind windows (pl. 51), all connected by similar railing and molding designs. These are almost identical to the palace representations done in low-relief carving at Sāñchī.

52. Chaitya-hall, stupa and interior detail

Early Buddhist chaityas were very plain and austere, a fact that is evident from this plate. However, the beautifully proportioned interior and the soft lighting from the wooden sun window grille in the great arch must have created a perfect atmosphere for worship.

Ajantā

53. Cave 9, façade, Ajantā (c. 50 B.C./50 A.D.)

The secluded Ajantā caves are located in a rock cliff along a semicircular ravine. Beyond the last cave is a waterfall that drops into a deep pool at the bottom of the ravine. It was in these idyllic surroundings that the Buddhist monks built caves for meditation and worship. The construction of the caves at Ajantā covered an extended period of time, the earliest occurring in the first century A.D. After a period of early activity, there was a two- or three-hundred-year halt, and then more building.

Cave 9 at Ajantā is a chaitya-hall, but unlike Bhājā, much of the façade still exists because it was done in stone rather than wood. The entrance is dominated by the large horseshoe arch and the balcony or musicians' gallery within the arch. Below the balcony is a series of five small latticed arches supported by pillars that once also supported a projecting roof or small porch. The large horseshoe arch is slightly bulbous and comes to a point at its apex. On either side of the door are two square windows. The composition of the whole façade is one of simple dignity. The monumental Buddha was added at a later date.

54–55. Cave 9, façade details

These plates show the tactile quality of the stone as well as the ends of the chaitya-arch and other architectural detail. The Buddha figures, added later, are simply carved and seem appropriate in their surroundings.

56. Cave 9, interior

The interior of cave 9 is similar in its simplicity and austerity to that of the chaitya-hall at Bhājā. Here the wooden ribs in the ceiling are gone, but the pillars and general design are much like those at Bhājā. A striking difference can be seen in the proportions of the two stupas—the Ajantā stupa has a higher base and as a result is much taller. As the stupa form evolved this development became more and more pronounced.

57. Cave 12, blind windows, Ajantā (c. 50 B.C./50 A.D.)

These three horseshoe-arch blind windows above a small doorway on the façade of cave 12, a vihāra, have characteristic trellis work suggesting a wooden screen. The horizontal bands under the windows suggest a railing or balcony. Their similarity to the railing designs of Sāñchī is immediately apparent.

Khandagiri-Udayagiri

58–59. General view of caves, Khandagiri-Udayagiri hills (first century B.C. or first century A.D.)

On the east coast of India near Bhubaneśvar, hundreds of miles from the Bombay area, is a group of early caves excavated by the Jains. These caves *(gumpha)*, on two small adjoining hillsides, include some thirty excavations. None of them are in the form of a chaitya-hall but are monastic, rock-cut dwellings with small, oblong cells opening onto pillared areas. Most of the cells are only four feet high and have slightly slanted floors on which the monks slept. Some of the caves contain a single cell; others are large, two-storied excavations. Rānī Gumpha, the largest and most elaborate, has cells arranged around three sides of an open courtyard. Such a plan may well have been designed as a site for religious ritual.

Because the rock outcropping of the Khandagiri-Udayagiri hills is coarse sandstone, many of the carved surfaces are rough and granular. However, this does not conceal the skill with which this early work was formed—work that is obviously not a primitive beginning, but a developed style. Heinrich Zimmer points out that the chisel has been used in a different way from that seen in the Sāñchī area: here it has been used almost as if it were a paint brush.[13] The Khandagiri-Udayagiri caves are generally dated in the first century B.C. or first century A.D., but Krishna Chandra Panigrahi gives the dates as the second century B.C. and one cave as early as 1000 B.C.[14]

These caves occupy a relatively small area. Plates 58 and 59 show the general terrain and the position of some of the caves. The remains of a two-story excavation are evident in plate 58.

60. Bagh Gumpha, Khandagiri-Udayagiri

The front façade of Bagh Gumpha (Tiger Cave) was carved to represent a tiger's head. The open mouth is comparable to the terrace of a conventional cave, and the single cell within the mouth becomes the tiger's throat.

61. Ganesha Gumpha, Khandagiri-Udayagiri

The excavations at Khandagiri-Udayagiri are generally similar in design: small cells open onto a pillared terrace. The overhanging roof is a simple massive convex form resting on heavy pillars and brackets. These devices clearly show their origin from wooden prototypes.

62–65. Ganesha Gumpha, details

In plate 62 the door guardian at the left side of Ganesha Gumpha has lost the finished surface quality it probably once had; however, the figure stands in an easy, relaxed attitude, and its strength is its simplicity.

The figure in plate 63, from the bracket of the pillar that is second from the left, arches outward in following the line of the convex bracket. The simple movement and rhythm of the figure suggest the effort required to hold up a massive roof.

The first Indian example of sculptured animals used to guard an entrance area probably occurs at Ganesha Gumpha.[15] The two elephants are of massive, squat proportions. Plate 64's view of the right elephant reveals a rather stiff, angular quality—particularly in the relationship of the legs to the body.

The small section of the veranda relief shown in plate 65 seems to bear out Heinrich Zimmer's observation that much of the carving at Khandagiri-Udayagiri has a painterly quality (see n. 13). Some scholars have assumed that the iconography of these caves illustrates Jain legends, which are comparable to the Buddhist Jātaka stories.

66. Ananta Gumpha, detail above terrace door, Khandagiri-Udayagiri (second century B.C. or first century B.C./first century A.D.)

Shown here is a typical design above one of the cell doors. Note that the curve of the arch forms a semicircle rather than a horseshoe type. The figures within the arch appear to be paying tribute to the tree in the center. If this were a Buddhist shrine, the tree would symbolize the Buddha.

67. Detail, Khandagiri-Udayagiri (first century B.C. or first century A.D.)

Back-to-back animals—a common design device at Sāñchī—are a form introduced to India at the time of Aśoka. One wonders if perhaps craftsmen from Sāñchī also worked here.

Karle

68. Chaitya-hall, entrance area, Karle (last half of first century A.D.)

Located between Bombay and Poona, Karle is only a few miles from Bhājā. As visitors approach the Karle chaitya-hall, they see first a great detached stone column. Beyond this is a partially destroyed stone vestibule that once had three entrance areas and a pillared clerestory. Inside the vestibule is the richly ornamented chaitya façade with its towering horseshoe arch. The vestibule was basically a double post-and-beam design: two large posts supported a massive beam and four smaller posts stood on the beam to support the roof. The mortise holes in the stone indicate that there was once a wooden gallery or balcony hung across the front of the vestibule, with access by stairs at the back of the pillar. Some of the original wood that formed the lattice of the sun window is still in place. It is most unfortunate that a small, unattractive Hindu shrine stands in the Karle courtyard, just in front of the entrance to the chaitya-hall.

69. Chaitya-hall, façade and end detail

The walls on either side of the horseshoe arch and the two end walls are ornamented with rows of small chaitya-arches divided by horizontal bands of railing design. The effect suggests a multistoried building with balconies and tends to make the horseshoe arch appear taller.

70–72. Chaitya-hall, narthex screen details

Perhaps the most important feature of the Karle chaitya-hall is the sculpture that ornaments the narthex screen. Here are figures of heroic proportion and of an amazing quality. This sculpture also depicts India's idealized concept of the human figure: narrow shoulders, large breasts, small waist, and exaggerated hips for the female and solid stance, broad shoulders, and slender hips for the male. Dr. Sherman Lee points out that in the history of art one rarely finds such abundant human forms exuding so much masculinity and femininity.[16]

The male and female couples on the Karle screen are designated as amorous couples or donor couples—although there is no proof that they were donors. The railing design shown on plate 71 is almost identical to the one at Sāñchī.

The quality of the sculpture in the panel to the right of the right entrance (pl. 72), is not as finished a work as that in plate 70. The male figure is rather bulky around the hips, and the female figure (even for the Indian ideal) has especially massive hips and thighs.

73. Chaitya-hall, interior detail

The interior of Karle, largest of the rock-cut temples, is comparable in size to that of a Gothic church. The main hall is separated from the two side aisles by ornamented columns. As seen from the entrance area, the sculptured capitals merge into a band and appear as a continuous frieze around the hall. Above this ornate carving is the simple, high-arched vault with its plain wooden ribs. The two rows of columns, the vaulted ceiling, and the half-light from the great arched window produces a mysterious and spiritual quality.

74. Chaitya-hall, interior capital detail

The motif used in the capital design is that of elephants and riders, each capital having two elephants with riders. The wooden ribs set into the stone produce an interesting pattern of dark and light.

Kanheri

75. Cave 3, chaitya-hall façade, Kanheri (second century A.D.)

The last of the Hināyāna chaitya-halls to be excavated was Kanheri, which is located in a pleasant, wooded area just north of Bombay. There is little doubt that Karle was the model for this Buddhist sanctuary, but Kanheri is smaller, its craftsmanship somewhat inferior, and its interior apparently unfinished. This was a period that saw a rising interest in Hinduism and some decline in Buddhism. The Kanheri site contains more than a hundred caves, but there is only one chaitya-hall and most of the vihāras are relatively plain. Those that are ornamented were later excavations. Kanheri is particularly interesting because its stone façade, which is similar to the one at Karle, is more or less complete. Plate 75

shows a courtyard enclosed by a low rail-patterned wall, two attached pillars within the courtyard (not free-standing, as at Karle), an outer screen with three entrance areas and a pillared clerestory above (just as the screen at Karle once was), and beyond this the ornamented wall of the cave with an arched sun window. The low courtyard wall is a new device and is interestingly ornamented. Two guardians stand at the center steps and another one is positioned at the far right. At the bottom of the wall is an alternating series of medallion and dwarf motifs. Above this a narrow band of animals faces toward the center opening. The conventional rail design is similar to those seen at Sāñchī.

76. Cave 3, chaitya-hall, detail of plate 75

77. Cave 3, chaitya-hall, narthex screen detail
As at Karle, the narthex screen is ornamented with donor or amorous couples. The carving is more concerned with actual human proportions and is therefore more realistic. The four figures here seem to be awaiting the approach of an important person, possibly the Buddha, and they hold flowers ready to throw in his path.

78. Cave 3, chaitya-hall, interior detail
The interior of Kanheri, though smaller, is similar to Karle. Some of the pillars and capitals are ornamented, others are left plain, which seems to indicate that the interior was never finished.

79. Cave 1, pillar detail, Kanheri
Just to the right of the chaitya-hall are caves 1 and 2. This massive pillar from cave 1 seems somewhat primitive. The relationship of the cushion capital and the two square blocks is not completely satisfactory.

80. Cave 2, stupa, Kanheri
Cave 2 was obviously never finished. This small plain stupa had been painted white, making it stand out in its grottolike setting. The Buddha figures behind the stupa were added after the introduction of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Mathurā Fragments

81. War god, fragment, Mathurā (c. 89 A.D.)
Mathurā, a town on the Yamunā (Jumna) River in north-central India, became a religious art center as early as the second or first century B.C. It was also one of the two schools flourishing during the Kushan dynasty. The other, Gandhāra, received its inspiration from the West and developed suddenly, but Mathurā evolved from a background of ancient indigenous tradition. Today there are no existing monuments from this early Indian school, for Muslim raiders completely leveled the ancient holy city and its shrines. Such was the fate of most North Indian architecture.
Much of the red sandstone of India is flecked with a light color—a fact that does not enhance a piece of sculpture. This god of war (Karttikeya) stands with his two feet solidly placed and has rather square, heavy proportions. Although he holds a spear, his attitude suggests a benevolent being rather than a warrior. Although a Hindu god, with different accessories he could easily become a Buddha figure. His girdle gives a graceful, flowing movement to the composition. (Mathurā Museum, Mathurā)

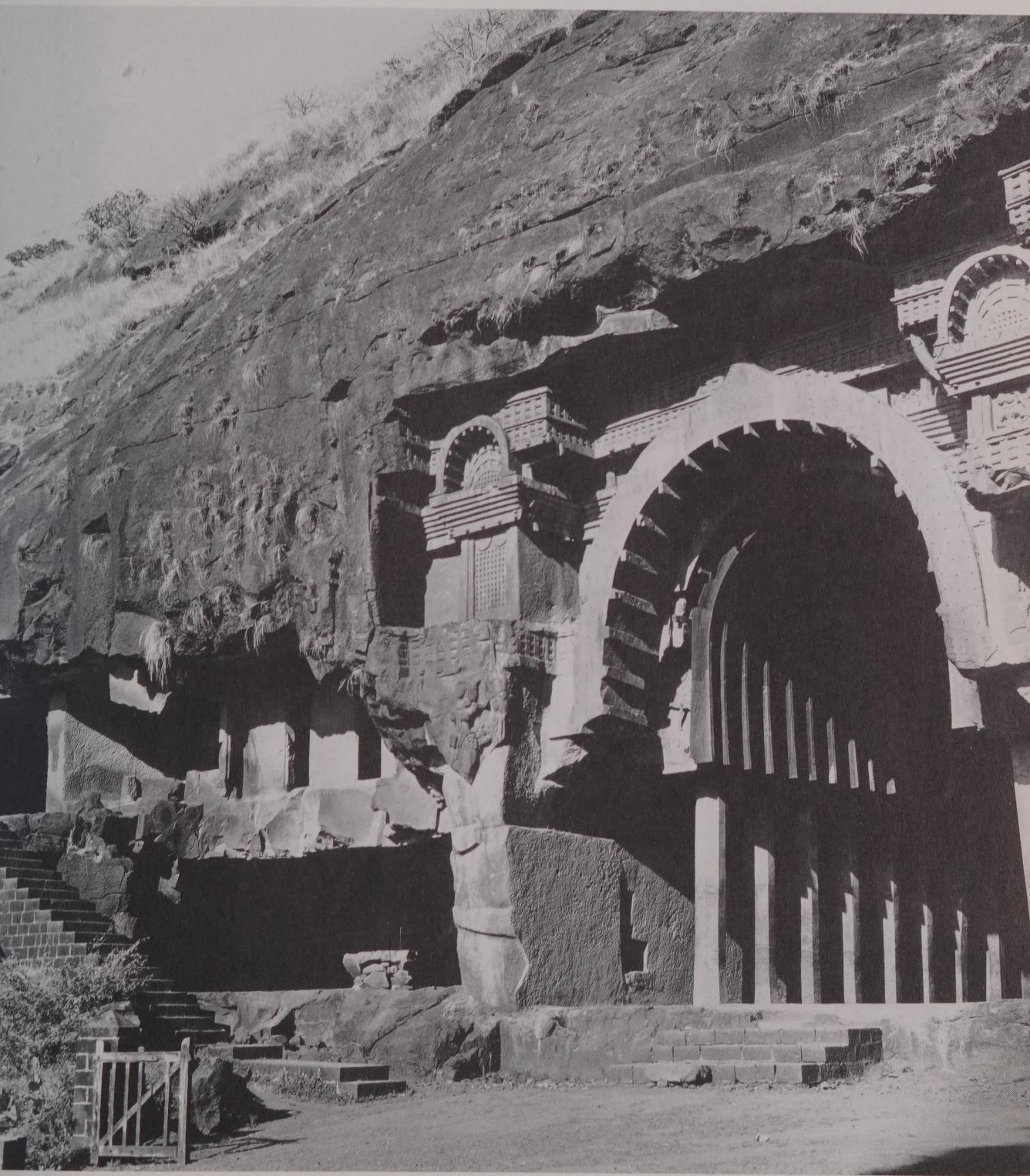
82. Standing Buddha, Mathurā (second century A.D.)
The personification of the Buddha did not occur until after the conservative and liberal elements of Buddhism had divided, producing the Hināyāna and Mahāyāna orders—both of which survive today. The craftsmen of Mathurā probably created the earliest indigenous image of the Buddha—one that may have been produced before the Gandhāra Buddha.[17] The early standing Buddha in this plate is simply done but already suggests an inward spiritual quality. The folds of his garment are produced by stylized lines, but the body beneath suggests a living, vital being. The hand is raised in the gesture of assurance. (Mathurā Museum, Mathurā)

83. Buddha head, fragment, Mathurā (second century A.D.)

This large Buddha head (about 21½ inches tall) indicates how important the Mathurā Buddha image was in its influence on later Indian art, as well as on other Asiatic art. The head is a simplified sculptural mass more concerned with the total aspect than with anatomical detail. All parts have a fluid, outward-swelling quality that suggests an inner force or vitality. The *ushnisha*, a protuberance growing from the crown of the head to indicate superhuman knowledge and consciousness and already an established part of the Buddha image,[18] is simply treated here. (Mathurā Museum, Mathurā)

84. Bodhisattva head, fragment, Mathurā (second century A.D.)

It is interesting to compare this head with the preceding one. The Bodhisattva does not have the inner spiritual force that is found in the Buddha image, which seems logical since he had not yet attained Buddhahood. The simple contours of the face make an interesting contrast to the more ornate hair style and headpiece. (State Museum, Lucknow)

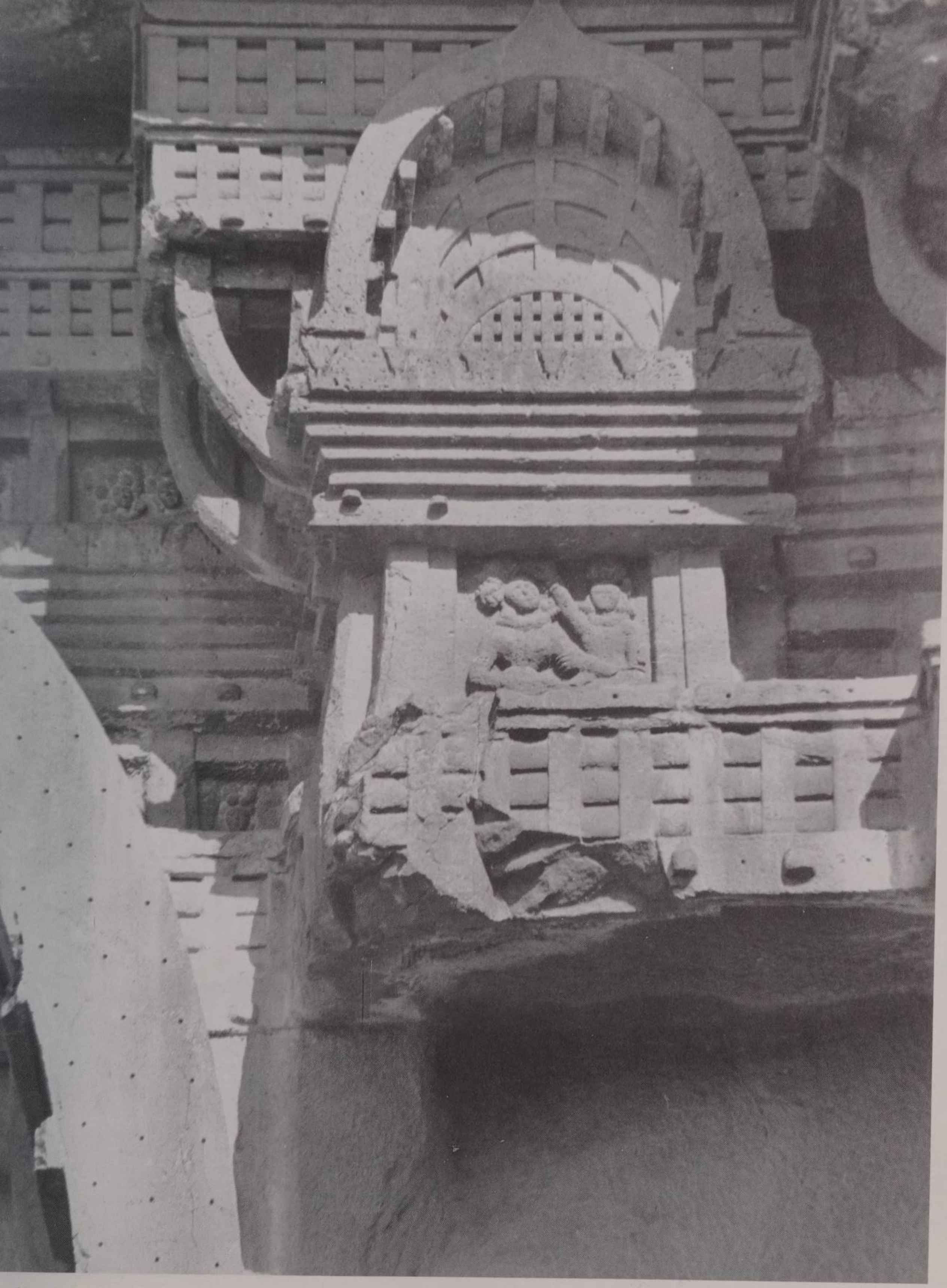


47. Chaitya-hall, façade, Bhājā

48. Chaitya-hall, façade detail

49. Chaitya-hall façade and interior

50. Chaitya-hall, façade and interior detail

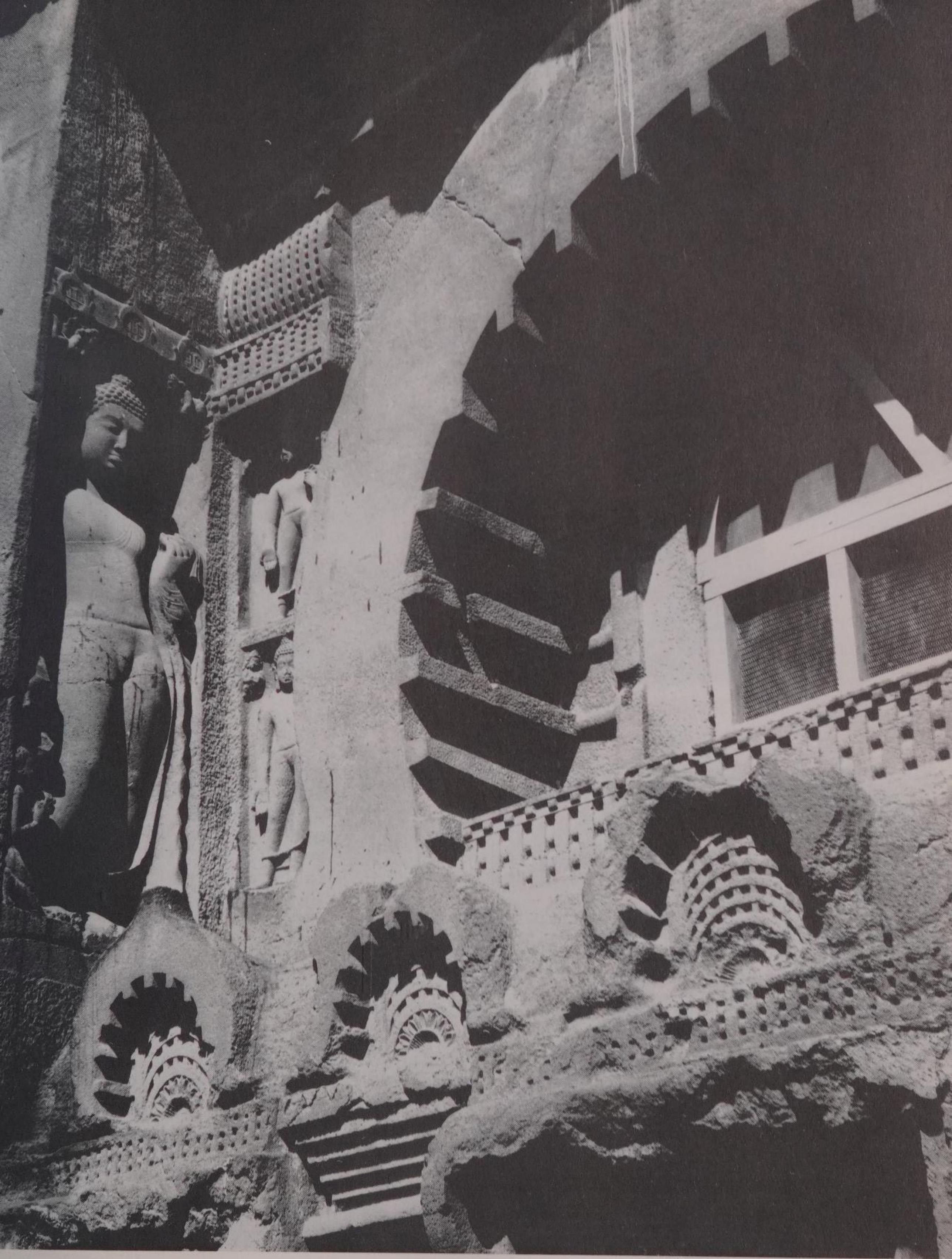


51. Chaitya-hall, façade and interior detail

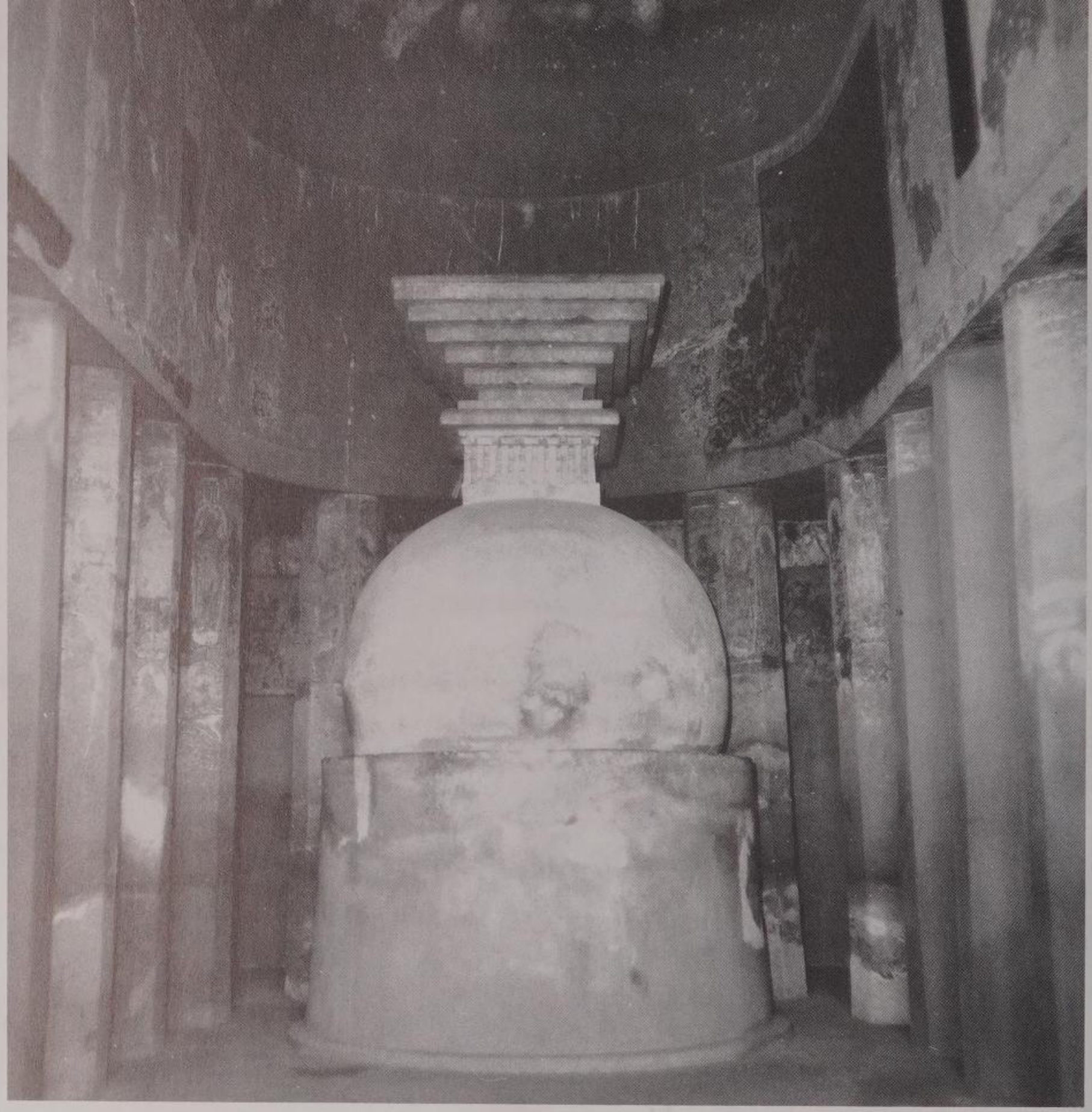
52. Chaitya-hall, stupa and interior detail

53. Cave 9, façade, Ajantā

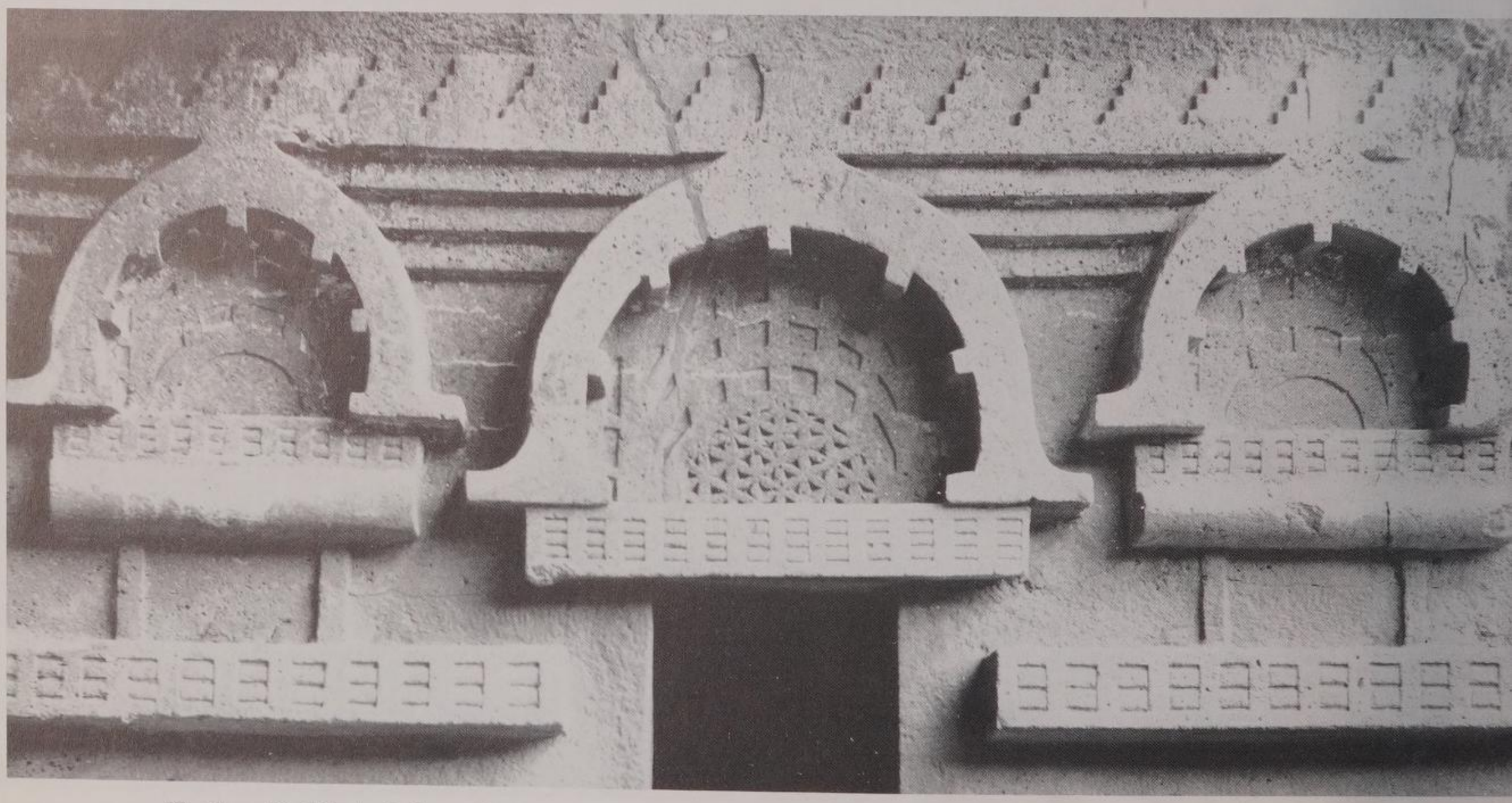
54. Cave 9, detail



55. Cave 9, detail



56. Cave 9, interior



57. Cave 12, blind windows, Ajantā

58. Khandagiri-Udayagiri caves, general view

59. Khandagiri-Udayagiri caves, general view

60. Bagh Gumpha, Khandagiri-Udayagiri

61. Ganesha Gumpha, Khandagiri-Udayagiri

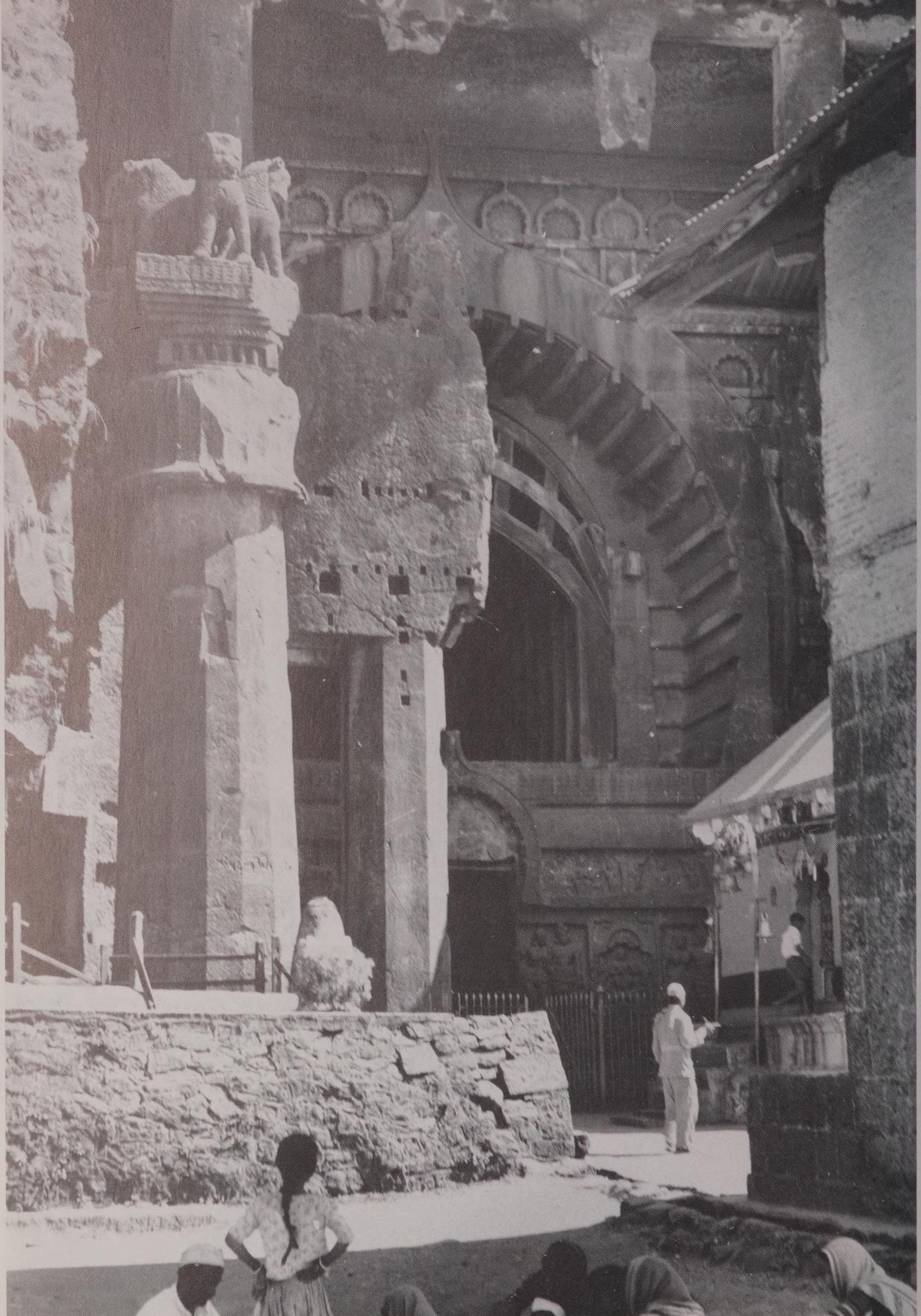
63. Ganesha Gumpha, detail

64. Ganesha Gumpha, detail

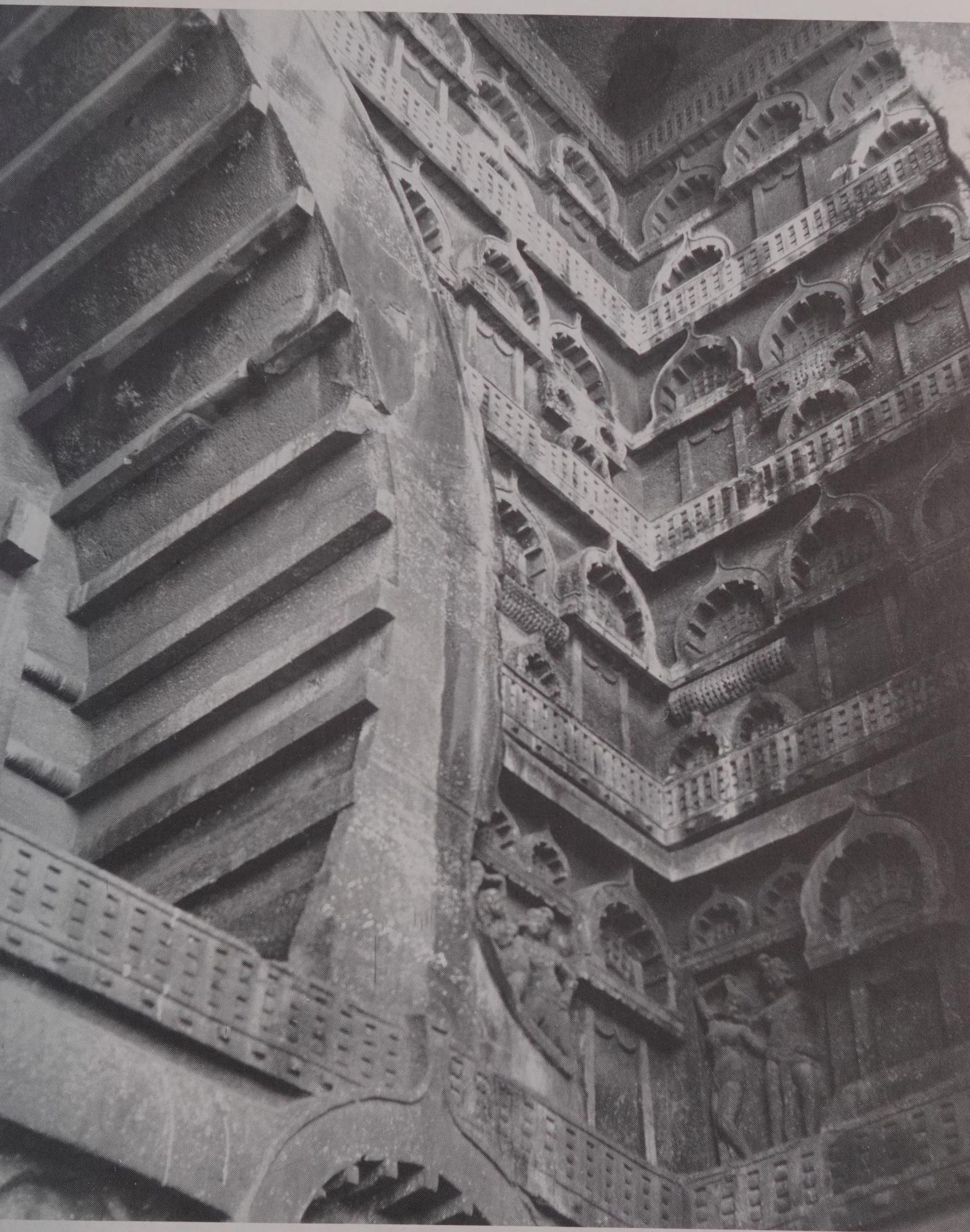
65. Ganesha Gumpha, detail

66. Ananta Gumpha, detail, Khandagiri-Udayagiri

67. Detail, Khandagiri-Udayagiri



68. Chaitya-hall, entrance area, Karle



69. Chaitya-hall, façade detail

70. Chaitya-hall, narthex screen detail

71. Chaitya-hall, narthex screen detail

72. Chaitya-hall, narthex screen detail

73. Chaitya-hall, interior detail

74. Chaitya-hall, interior capital detail

75. Cave 3, chaitya-hall façade, Kanheri

76. Cave 3, chaitya-hall, detail

77. Cave 3, chaitya-hall, narthex screen detail

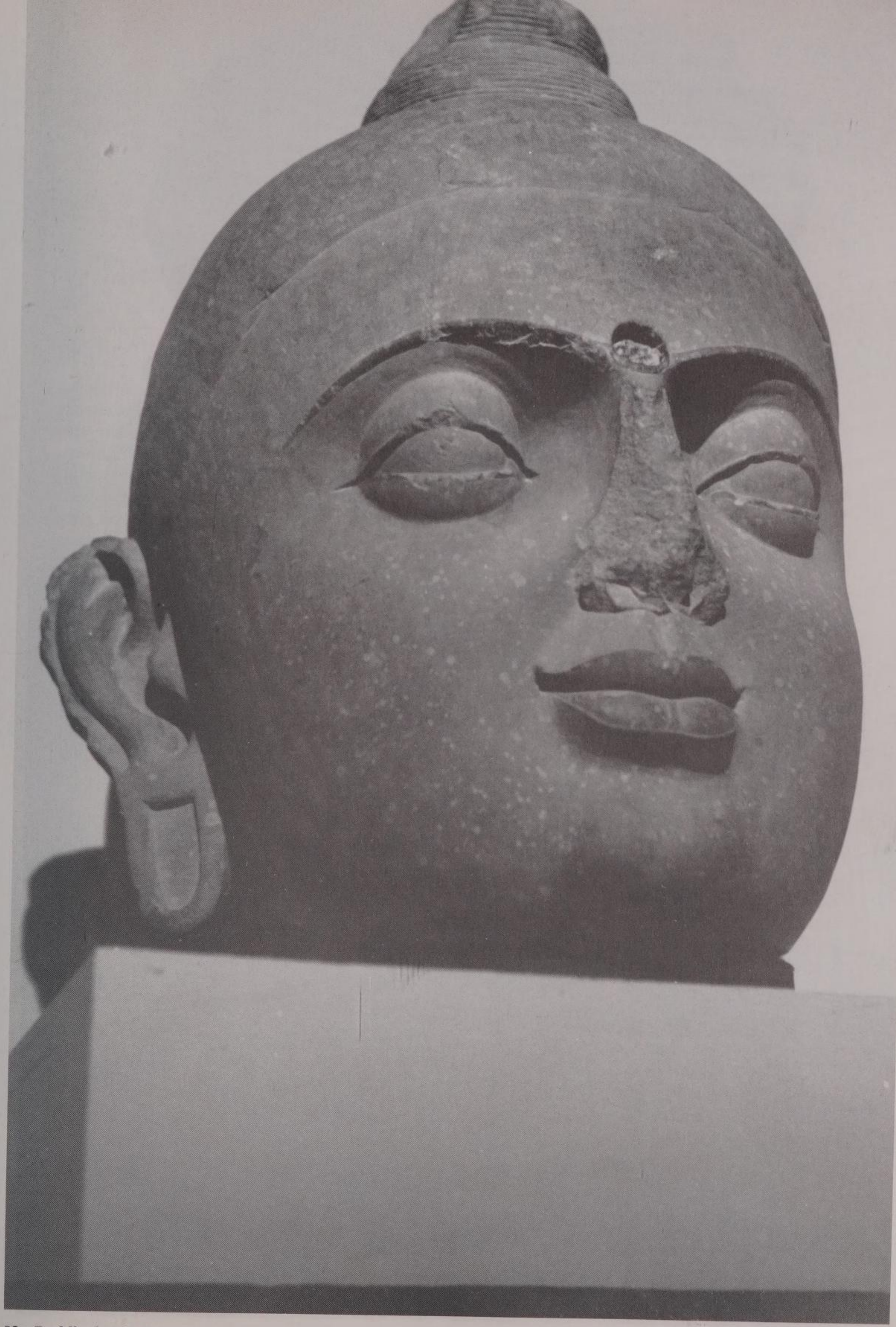
78. Cave 3, chaitya-hall, interior detail

79. Cave 1, pillar detail, Kanheri

80. Cave 2, stupa, Kanheri

81. War god, fragment, Mathurā

82. Standing Buddha, Mathurā



83. Buddha head, Mathurā

84. Bodhisattva head, Mathurā

2

The Development of Art and Architecture during the Gupta Dynasty

In the fourth and fifth centuries the rulers of the Gupta dynasty (Candragupta I, Samudragupta, Candragupta II, Kamāragupta, Skandagupta) succeeded in bringing northern India under one rule. Not since the third century B.C. during the Mauryan Empire had North India experienced the sovereignty of a single rule, and in this case it was not a foreign rule. Relatively little personal information is known about the Gupta kings, but we do know something about life in the country they ruled. Chinese Buddhist pilgrims who visited India at this time have given us their impression of the country. The picture they present is one of a prosperous country where people enjoy freedom, where moral standards are high, and where good will exists among the citizenry. If this is a true evaluation, it tells us that the government was ruled by kings who were concerned with the welfare of their subjects.

However, there is no doubt that during the Gupta period Indian art experienced its greatest creative growth, which ultimately produced a quality of art that has not been surpassed in India since that time. Some of the sculpture created then is among the best in the world. The standards developed for form and design by the Gupta artists not only influenced Gupta art but also determined the course of Indian art for centuries following the decline of the Gupta dynasty.

Very little constructed architecture from the Gupta period remains today, which is explained by the fact that brick was the common building material and construction with stone was just starting. A brick building is very easy to destroy.

Sārnāth and Mathurā

85. Dhāmekh stupa, Sārnāth (fifth or early sixth century)

This tall, cylinder-shaped stupa, rising from a high base, is decorated with eight archlike projections. Built with a brick core that may date from the time of Aśoka, the stupa was later faced with stone masonry. Although it is now a rather shapeless monument, fragments of the stone carving are of interest. The date of the original stupa is not known, but the stone carving is probably early sixth century. There is some doubt that it was ever finished, and much of the stone has been removed for other buildings. It is interesting to see the change in shape from the simple half-sphere of the early stupa. Dhāmekh Stupa is twenty feet less in diameter but more than three times as high (165 feet) as the Great Stupa at Sāñchī. The further elongation and elaboration of the stupa form may be seen in such countries as Nepal, Burma, and Thailand.

86. Dhāmekh stupa, frieze detail

The border design, once a continuous band around the lower portion of the stupa, consists of floral and geometric patterns. This elaborate relief carving, typical of the Gupta style, is beautifully executed to take advantage of the play of light and shadow. Percy Brown points out that the spiral floral design is the archetype of the distinctive border of spiral curves and medallions that ornament the screen of arches forming the façade of the Qutb Mosque at Delhi, which was erected many centuries later under Muslim rulers.[1]

87. Standing Buddha, fragment, Sārnāth (fifth century)

This slender Buddha figure from Sārnāth is typical of the graceful elegance of the Gupta period. The composition, with its subtle outward-swelling planes reduced to the utmost simplicity, suggests a universal conception of the deity-idea rather than a representation of the mortal Buddha. The serenity of his face and the simplicity of his garment make an interesting contrast to the rich design on the halo. His right hand is raised in the gesture of assurance or blessing. (Indian Museum, Calcutta)

88. Standing Buddha, fragment, Mathurā (c. 550)

This beautifully conceived Buddha is typical of Mathurā's artistic achievement. The movement and rhythm of the robe, combined with the solid contours of the figure, and the beautifully designed halo and its relation to the curve of the drape are suggested by stylized raised lines rather than the incised lines found on earlier figures. The hand raised in blessing repeats the inward serenity of the face. The solid proportion of this figure seems typical of the Mathurā school, just as the slender Buddha represents the Sārnāth school. (State Museum, Lucknow)

89. Mounted warrior, fragment, Sārnāth (fifth/sixth century)

The swirling motion and rhythm in this composition seems appropriate to the subject matter—a warrior mounted on a leogryph. The tail of the mythical animal is wound around the waist of the second warrior, who seems to be suspended in space. The composition, perfectly arranged, is full of vigor and vitality. (Archaeological Museum, Sārnāth)

90. Buddha head, fragment, Mathurā (fifth/sixth century)

The inward-looking quality found in the earlier Mathurā Buddha is still evident in this later Gupta head. The lips are full but the eyes are more almond-shaped, and the snail-shell hair treatment is more ornate and stylized. (Mathurā Museum, Mathurā)

Ajantā and Ellorā

91. Cave 16, stairway entrance, Ajantā (c. 475–500)

In the fifth century Mahāyāna Buddhism experienced a resurgence in cave architecture, and under the patronage of kings and wealthy donors its art once again flourished. Influenced by the Hindu religion, the Mahāyāna Buddhists had quickly adopted the concept of an anthropomorphic deity, and from that time most of their building was richly ornamented with representations of the Buddha or Bodhisattvas. This later Buddhist work shows the gracious and mellowing influence of the Gupta period, which is evident in the rich carving of the cave façades and in the pillared interiors. Inside the shrine the stupa is now ornamented with a seated or standing figure of the Buddha. In some cases Buddha figures were added to the earlier caves to make them conform to the new doctrine. At this time Ajantā experienced a burst of building activity that carried into the seventh century.

On either side of the stair entrance that leads to the courtyard of cave 16 are two elephants carved in relief, making the design of this entrance unique at Ajantā.

92. Cave 16, the teaching Buddha

In the shrine of cave 16, a vihāra, seated in the pose of the teacher is a huge Buddha whose massive proportions suggest a Mathurā influence. The pose is unusual in that the figure is not in the cross-legged position of yoga but is seated as if in a chair. Since the advent of Mahāyāna Buddhism the concept of the monastery had changed. The innermost cells had become small sanctuaries holding images of the Buddha, thus making a chapel-dwelling complex.

93. Cave 19, façade, Ajantā (c. 475–500)

Changes brought about by both the Gupta period and the new Buddhist doctrine are clearly indicated in this richly ornamented façade. The elegant pillared portico and projected cornice make a gracious entrance area, but the total façade is dominated by the simple horseshoe arch of the sun window. The various Buddha figures are simply done and all the ornament seems to organize into a unified design. Each of the figures, regardless of size or position, is framed in a rectangular niche. This makes the design

of the façade a series of repeated rectangular shapes within the larger vertical and horizontal elements. The round columns and pilasters, plus the arched sun window and the repeated small curved niches in the cornice, make an interesting contrast. Cave 19 at Ajuntā must be considered one of the high points of Buddhist architecture.

94–96. Cave 19, details of façade

The next three plates show in greater detail the simple elegance of the Gupta Buddha figure and the rich ornament found on the architectural elements. The series of small horseshoe arches carved into the cornice each contain the head of a gandhārva. This device was common in Hindu iconography at this time and was used to convey the idea that the temple was the heavenly abode of the divinity. It was probably used for the same purpose at Ajantā. Plate 94 is a detail from the left of the entrance, plate 95 is right of the entrance, and plate 96 is a detail of the right corner. Most of the Buddha figures are shown in the teacher or boon-bestower attitude.

97. Cave 19, right side-chapel

In front of cave 19 is a spacious courtyard formed by the façade of the chaitya-hall and the two end walls. In each end wall is a side-chapel. Shown here is the completely preserved façade of the right chapel. It is contained within a rectangular frame and has four handsome columns—two free-standing and two engaged. The chapel on the opposite end wall has been badly damaged.

98. Cave 19, interior detail

The interior design of cave 19 has both carved and painted ornament. Much of the paint has deteriorated. The closely grouped columns have bracketed capitals, giving the illusion that a continuous band of ornament supports a higher frieze. The vaulted ceiling is similar in design to those found in the earlier chaitya-halls, except in this case the ribs are carved in stone. The stupa (or *dāgoba*) has a very high base that is ornamented with a standing Buddha. The three umbrellas on top are supported by a massive shaft that is connected to the ceiling. This stupa form seems to resemble a small pavilion with an onion-shaped dome.

99. Cave 1, front façade, Ajantā (fifth/sixth century)

The development of the vihāra design is clearly evident in cave 1. It no longer is just a group of cells off a balcony or gallery, but also includes a veranda, hall, and sanctuary. The façade of cave 1 is distinguished from many of the other vihāras by its rich ornament. There was once a porch similar in design to that of cave 19, but only the jagged rock where the cornice broke remains. The six columns across the front are beautifully varied.

100–101. Cave 1, details of front façade

The rich carving of the capitals and the entablature are clearly shown in plate 100. Each central panel of the two capitals contains a Buddha in the teaching attitude, and the projecting ends have flying couples holding flowers and garlands. The carving of the entablature is made up of both human and animal panels. The gandhārvas in the small horseshoe arches repeat a common design motif. Plate 101 is a detail of plate 99.

102–3. Cave 1, pilaster detail

At each end of the front façade are two pilasters on which are carved a half and a full medallion. The pilaster is visible in plate 99 but these details show the rich quality of the carving, even though the stone is badly eroded.

104. Cave 26, façade detail, Ajantā (475-500)

Cave 26, a chaitya-hall, is larger than cave 19 but is similar in basic design. Although the front façade, veranda, and courtyard are badly damaged, there is much carving still intact. This plate shows the sun window and the profusion of ornament surrounding it. On either side of the chaitya-arch is a seated yaksha or guardian, and next to these are two large Buddhas standing in the attitude of boon-bestowing or benediction *(varada-mudrā)*. On the shallow end walls that frame the chaitya-arch are two similar

Buddha figures twelve to fifteen feet tall. The area surrounding the arch is profusely carved with small Buddhas and attendants, couples, and decorative devices. This is indeed a contrast to the simple austerity of the earlier Hināyāna shrines. Here is the rich, mellowing ornament that developed during the Gupta period.

105–6. Cave 26, façade details

In the façade of cave 26 are three richly carved doorways—a large center doorway and two smaller side doors. Shown in plate 106 (a detail of pl. 104) is the left doorway, which is ornamented by both floral decoration and figures. The *mithuna* figures (amorous couples) are in rectangular niches within a wide band framing the doorway. They make a pleasing contrast to the narrower bands of decorative pattern.

107. Cave 10, façade detail, Ellorā (c. 600–650)

Ellorā, which is only about fifty miles from Ajantā, is the site of Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain rock-cut architecture. The Buddhist caves are the work of Mahāyāna Buddhists, who started at Ellorā about the same time that they renewed their excavating at Ajantā. In all there are thirty-four caves, but one, the Kailāsanātha (cave 16), is a huge complex with both cave and monolithic rock-cut architecture. This great Hindu shrine is discussed later. Cave 10, called Viśvakarman, is the only true chaitya-hall at Ellorā, and is the last one the Buddhists excavated. Viśvakarman is the Hindu god of architecture, and no Buddhist cave would have been so named in early Buddhism. The façade is strongly rectangular, and the large, simple sun window of the earlier chaitya-hall has become a relatively small window above the balcony door. This window, part of a decorative design suggesting a trefoil, is flanked by a group of flying figures. On each side of the door are shrinelike niches containing Buddha figures. This chaitya façade has very little carving compared to those at Ajantā, and the design emphasis is on the balcony rather than on the pillared ground section—although there is a courtyard entrance.

108–9. Cave 10, façade details

Plate 108 is a detail of plate 107.

The detail shown in plate 109 appears above the niche to the left of the door. It is a decorative motif made up of a group of symmetrically arranged horseshoe arches *(gavāksas)*. This design was a popular device in later Hindu architecture. A good example is above the doorways at Teli-ka-Mandir temple.

110. Cave 11, façade, Ellorā (c. 700–750)

Caves 11 and 12 were the last Buddhist caves excavated at Ellorā. Hinduism in India was growing in popularity and Buddhism was on the decline. As the centuries passed the Hindu religion was gradually influencing Buddhist doctrine. The stupa concept had virtually disappeared as the dominant element of the Buddhist religion, being replaced by Buddha figures. With the decline of the stupa the chaitya sanctuary was no longer necessary and was replaced by a much-enlarged vihāra. Although the exterior was plain, the interior included a shrine, great pillared halls, figures of the Buddha, and Bodhisattvas. Caves 11 and 12 are both large three-storied vihāras. Their plain façades make them look rather like midtwentieth-century ramp garages.

111. Cave 11, pillar detail

This detail from an interior column clearly shows the tactile quality of the stone. The chain link design is sometimes seen in later Hindu architecture. The combination of curves and straight lines adds interest to the composition.

112–13. Cave 33, pillar details, Ellorā (c. 750–850)

This cave, called Indra-Sabha, was excavated by the Jains, who continued to cut rock sanctuaries at Ellorā later than either the Buddhists or Hindus. The Indra-Sabha cave, one of the later ones at Ellorā, is also one of the most minutely decorated, its surfaces suggesting the work of an ivory carver. Plate 112 is one of a series of pillars on the first-floor gallery, just to the left of a large figure of Indra. The decorative devices on the wide horizontal band are an interesting contrast to the rigid vertical lines.

The pillar shown in plate 113, with its cushion capital and vertical ribbing carried the length of the pillar, is similar to that in plate 112.

114. Cave 33, balustrade detail

This small (less than a foot wide) horizontal band, running along the top of the balcony balustrade, indicates the minuteness of the carving.

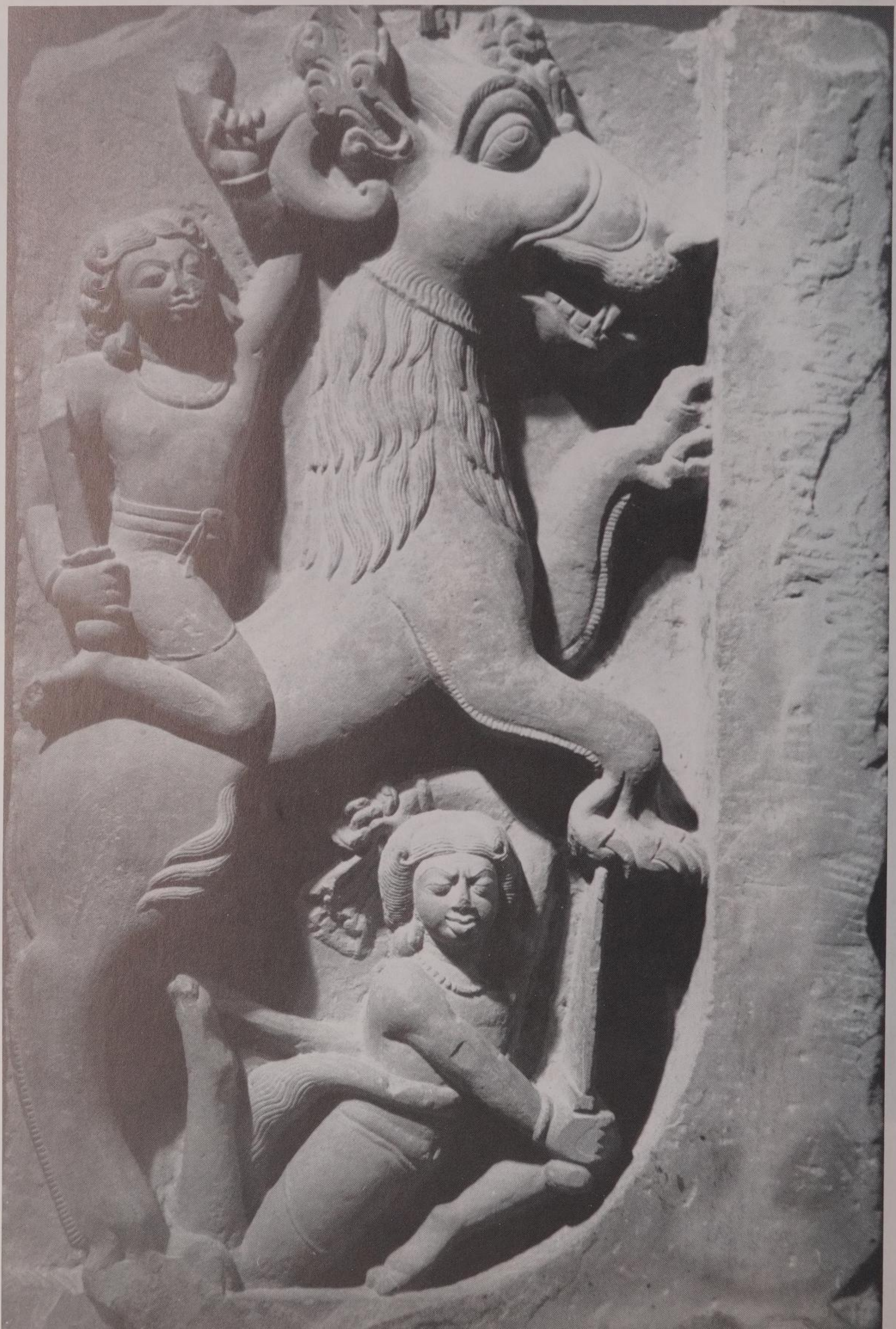
85. Dhāmekh stupa, Sārnāth

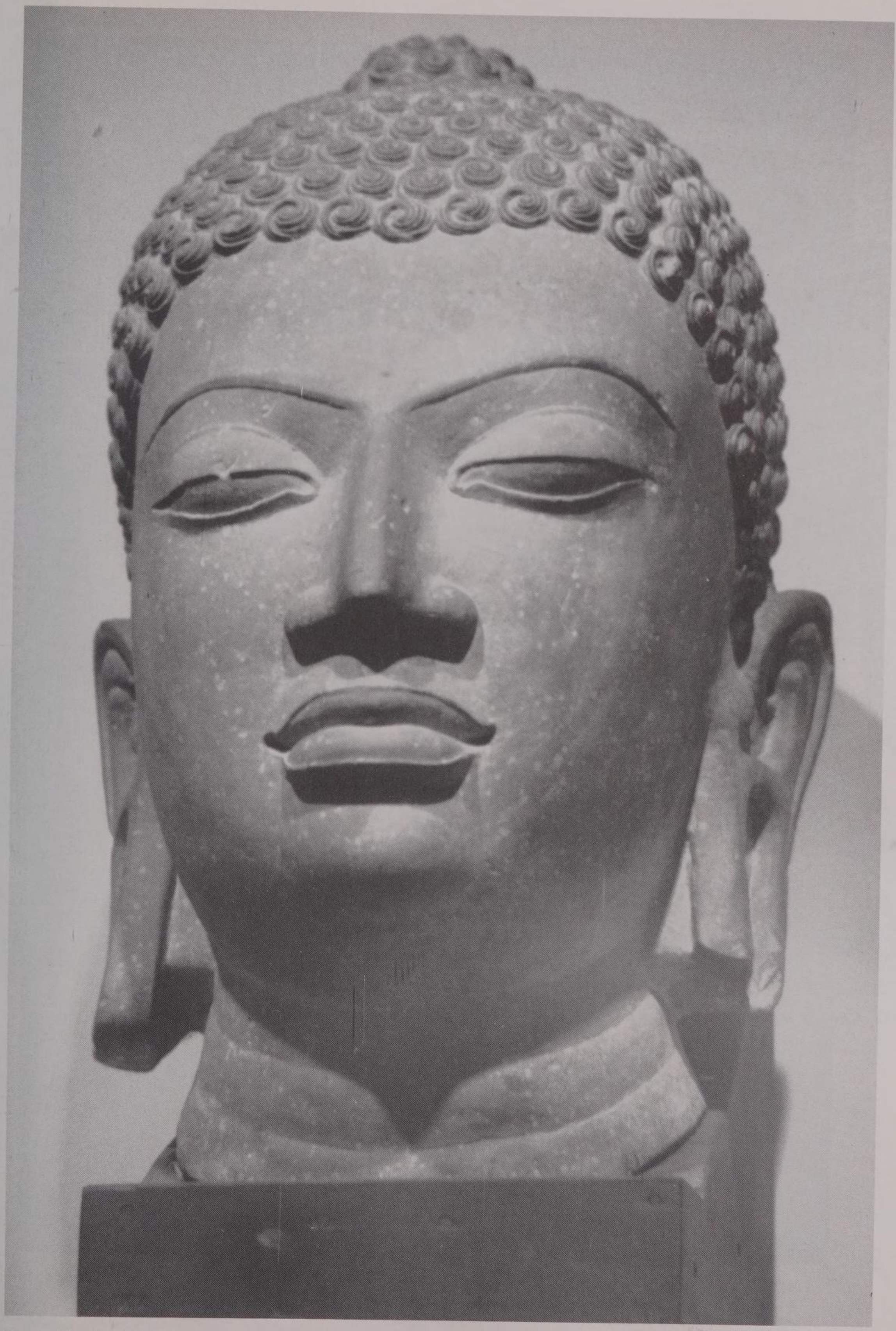
86. Dhāmekh stupa, frieze detail

87. Standing Buddha, fragment, Sārnāth

88. Standing Buddha, fragment, Mathurā

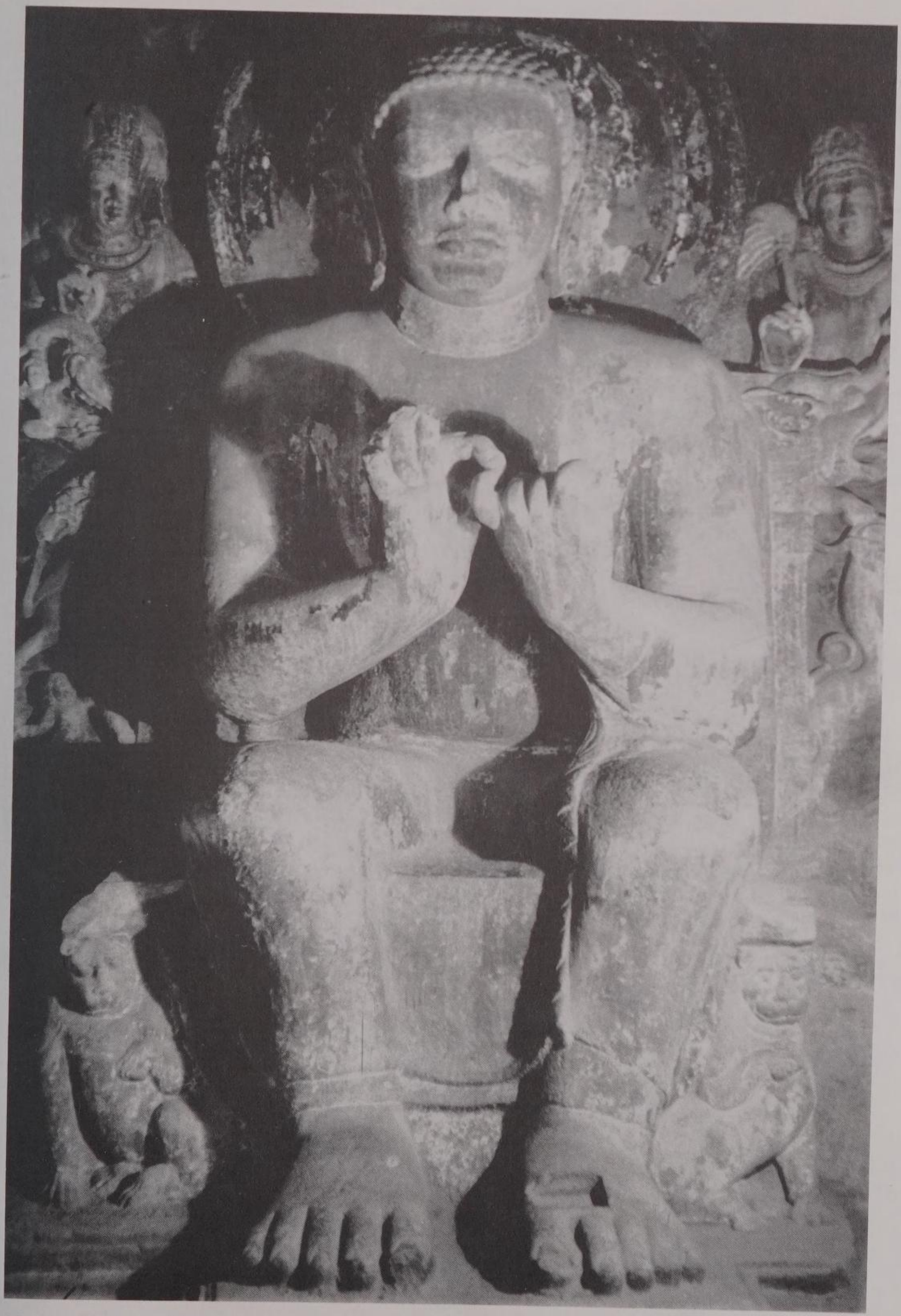
89. Mounted warrior, Sārnāth





90. Buddha head, Mathurā

91. Cave 16, stairway entrance, Ajantā



92. Cave 16, the teaching Buddha

93. Cave 19, façade, Ajantā

94. Cave 19, detail of façade

95. Cave 19, detail of façade

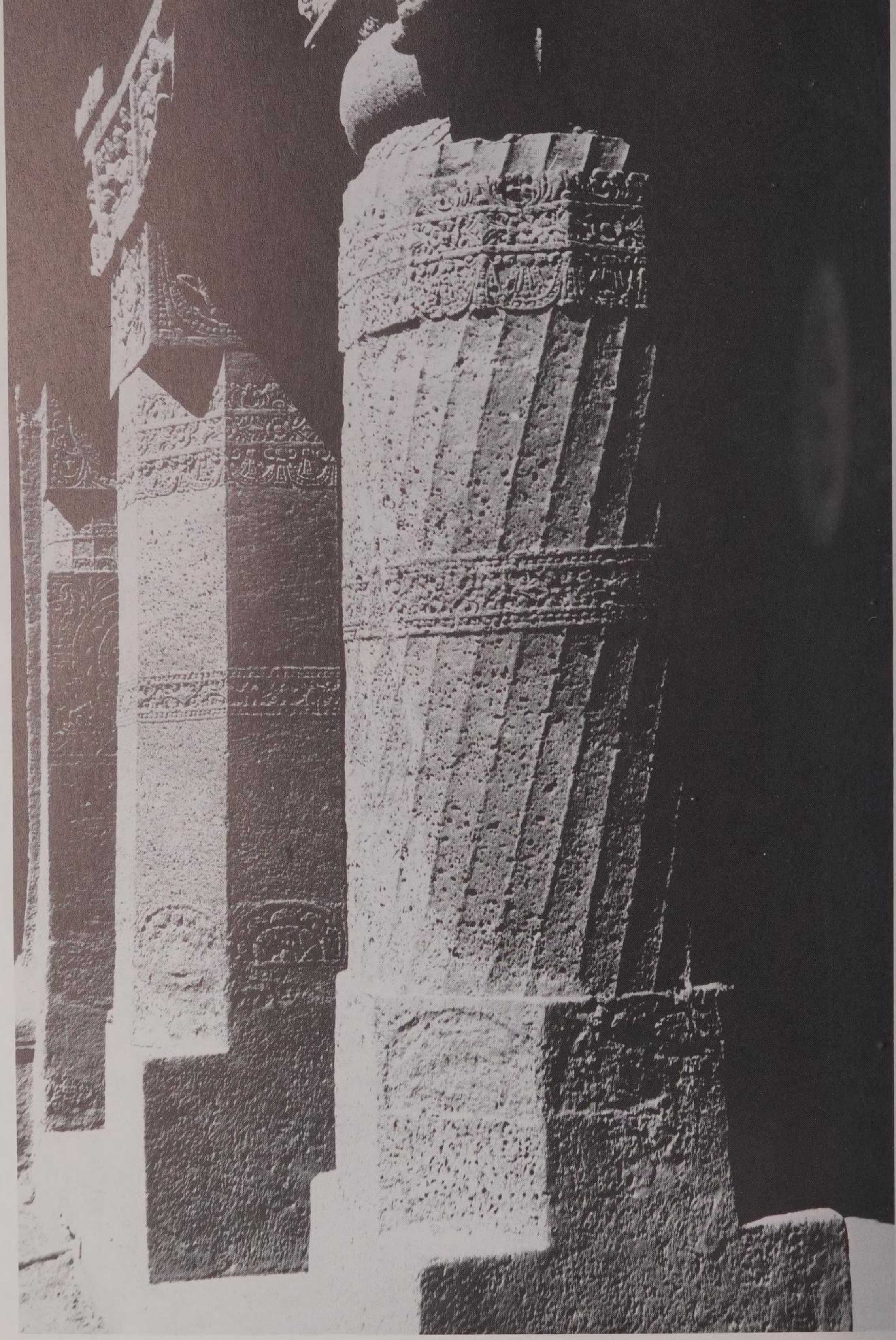
96. Cave 19, detail of façade

97. Cave 19, right side-chapel

98. Cave 19, interior detail

99. Cave 1, front façade, Ajantā

100. Cave 1, detail of front façade

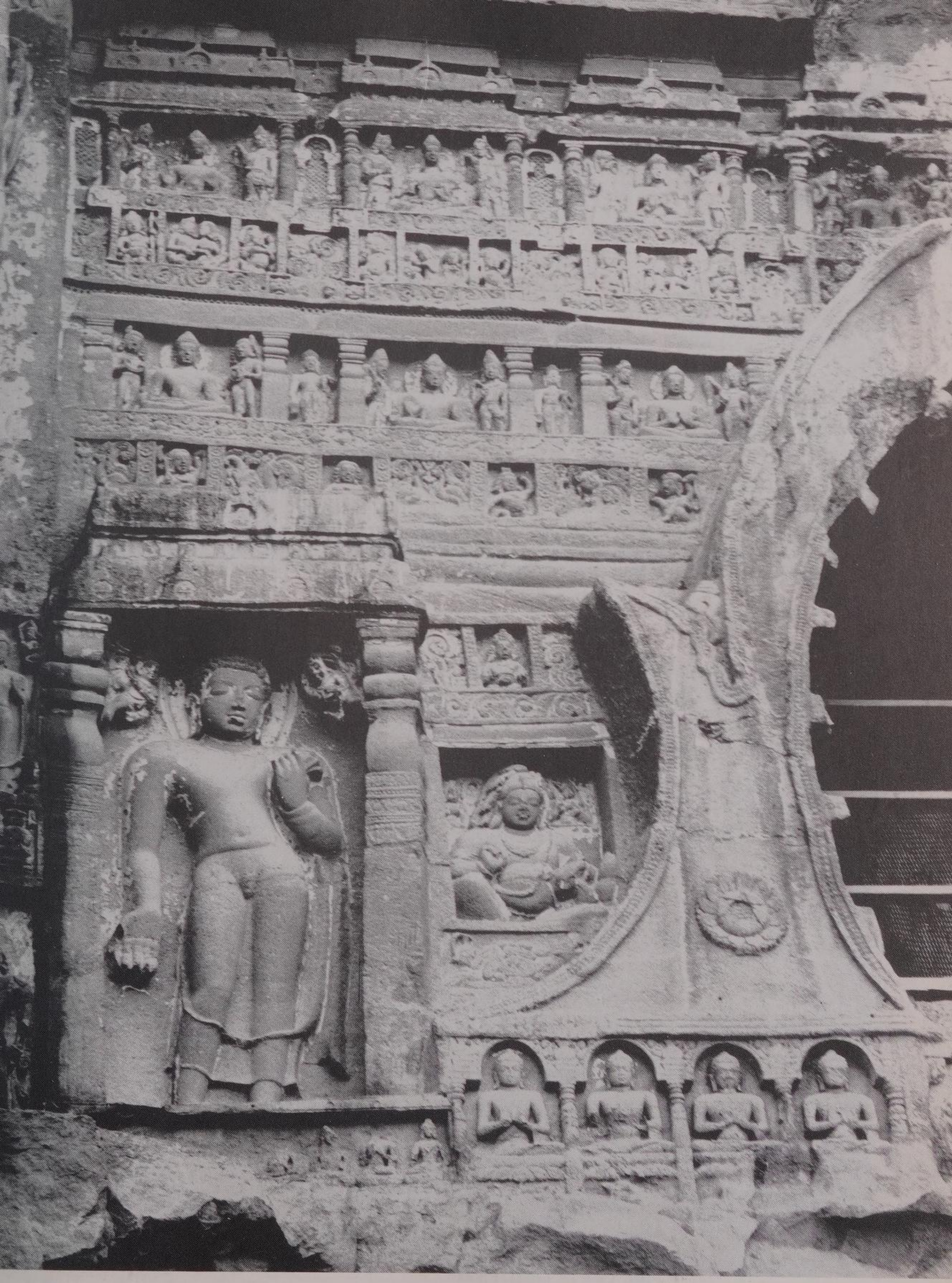


101. Cave 1, detail of front façade

102. Cave 1, pilaster detail

103. Cave 1, pilaster detail

104. Cave 26, façade, Ajantā



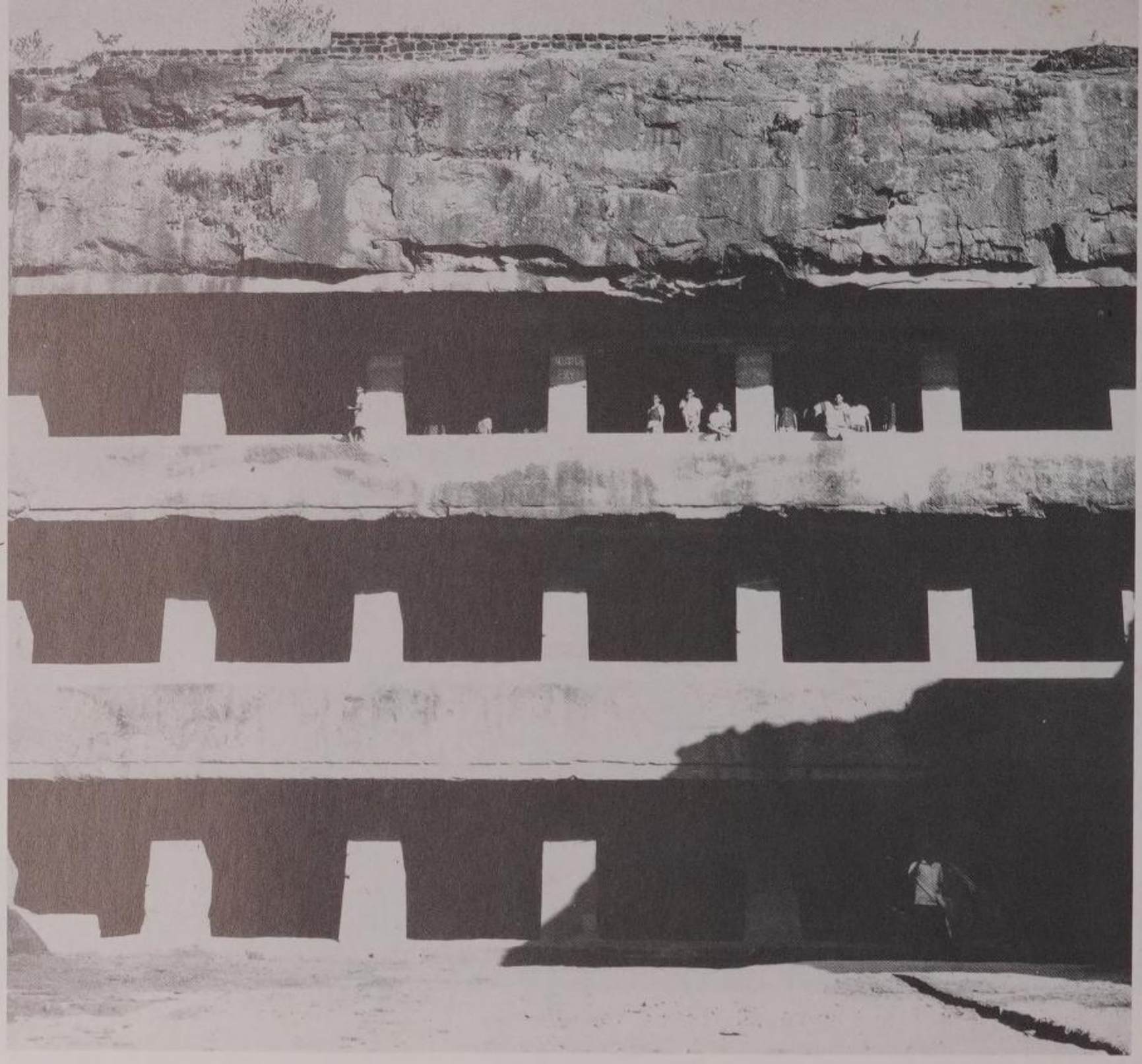
105. Cave 26, façade detail

106. Cave 26, façade detail

107. Cave 10, façade, Ellorā

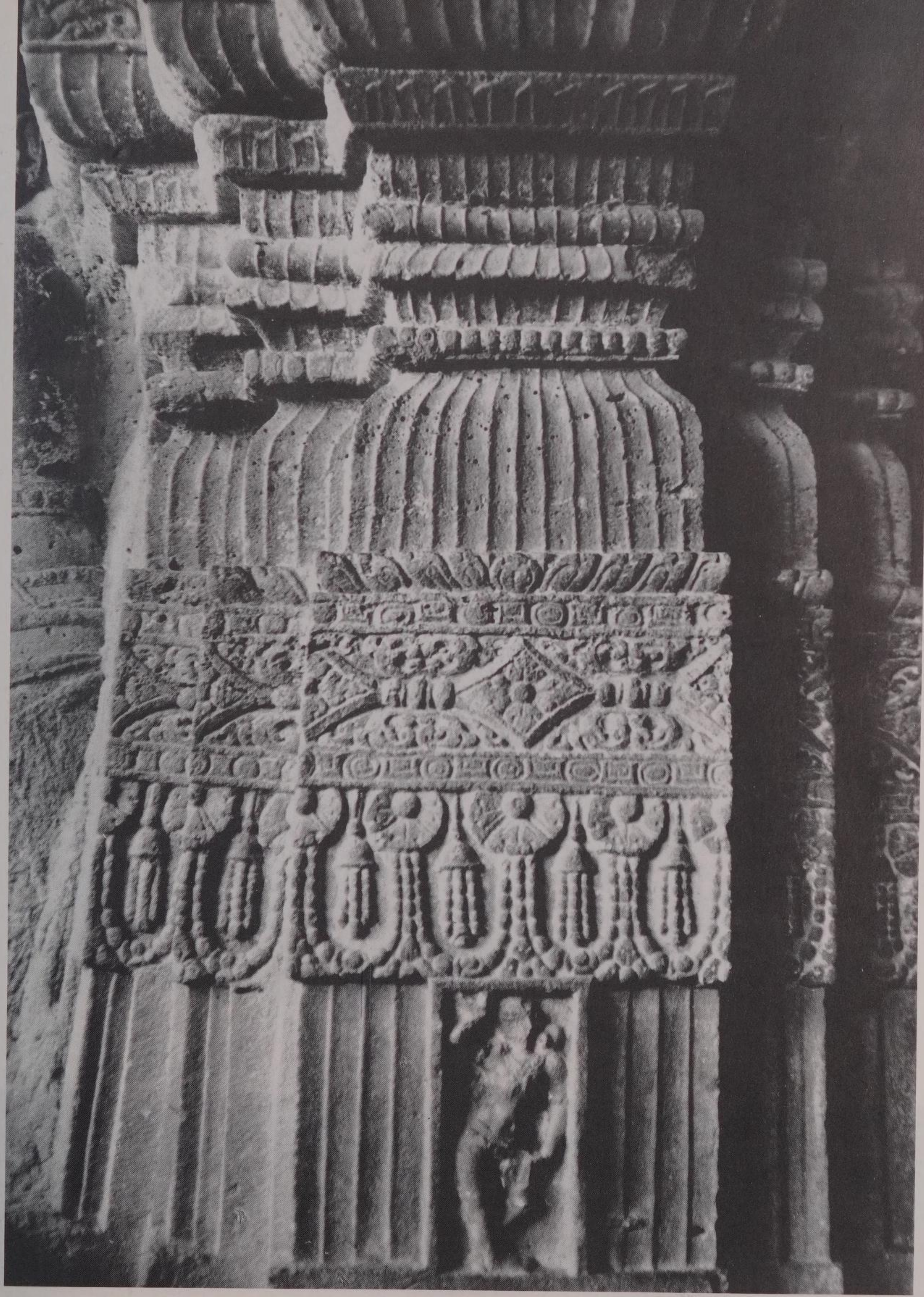
108. Cave 10, façade detail

109. Cave 10, façade detail



110. Cave 11, façade, Ellorā

111. Cave 11, pillar detail



112. Cave 33, pillar detail, Ellorā

113. Cave 33, pillar detail, Ellorā

114. Cave 33, balustrade detail

3

The Development of the Indian Temple

CONSTRUCTED ARCHITECTURE HAD EXISTED FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS BEFORE THE GUPTA PERIOD, the earliest period from which there are surviving structures. But since this early architecture was made from perishable materials, it has disappeared and is known only through existing stone representations in either two- or three-dimensional form. The Sāñchī craftsman, while depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha, also gave us glimpses of his own environment—buildings with barrel-vaulted roofs, balconies with distinctive railings, and horseshoe-arched windows that look like present-day dormers. Another source of information is rock-cut architecture, both the excavated cave and the sculptured monolith. The cave architecture informs us by the design of its negative spaces and the sculptured monolith by its positive masses.

Some of the earliest stone-constructed temples and chaitya-halls had barrel-vaulted roofs with semicircular ends, obviously copied from the same wooden prototype as that used for the rock-cut cave sanctuaries. An example of such a building is a Sāñchī temple ruin consisting of foundations and a few pillars, located just west of Temple 17 (the still-standing pillars and base may be seen in plate 124).

Another style of temple that survives today from this early Gupta period is the small, flat-roofed sanctuary consisting of a single square room or cella with plain walls and a pillared portico. This type of structure was widely distributed in India, a fact that may indicate that it was a very ancient form that evolved as a temple style. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy suggests that it may have derived from the prehistoric dolmens so abundant in India, since both use similar methods of slab construction.[1]

The enclosed shrine room and pillared porch of the early Gupta temple is the basis for later temple building in India. It was the logical result of India's religious requirements to circumambulate and enshrine the deity. New and elaborate elements were added during the temple's evolution. As the shrine room grew larger and the entrance more ornate, the pillared portico became a pillared hall completely surrounding the central chamber. The tower appeared first on a very small scale, possibly as an attempt to add interest to a flat roof or to emphasize the area above the shrine room. It was this small protruding area that ultimately became the great tower so characteristic of the Indian temple.

During the Gupta period the temple form was evolving and by the end of the seventh century its design had developed to a more or less standardized form. Although there were regional differences in style, a degree of uniformity resulted from two ancient forms of control—the canons of architecture *(śilpa śāstras)* and the guilds *(seni)*. The seni were involved with the actual construction of the temples, while the śilpa śāstras, under priestly supervision, were concerned with philosophical and metaphysical problems.[2] The design of an Indian temple was determined by metaphysical requirements, a fact that conditioned its plan and elevation. A most exacting procedure had to be followed to insure its sanctity and security. A Hindu temple—unlike the Buddhist chaitya-hall, which is designed for congregational worship—is the abode of the deity and an object of worship in itself.[3]

All the Indian temples have common basic elements that, when put together in a certain way, produce their design. These elements include the sanctuary *(vimāna)*, which usually faces east. Inside the vimāna is a small, dark chamber where the deity abides *(garbha griha*, womb house or germ cell), and above this is the tower *(śikhara)*. In front of the vimāna is an assembly hall for the worshipers *(maṇḍapa)*, which in some of the early temples was separate from the vimāna, but later was joined to it by a short vestibule or entrance area *(antarala)*. Leading to the maṅḍapa is usually a porch *(ardhamaṇḍapa)*. Surrounding the vimāna is an ambulatory *(prodakṣiṇa)*, and enclosing all these elements is a wall or series of cells *(prākāra)*. Ornamentation *(alaṅkāra)* of the temple is not optional, but is required.

The Indian temple is conceived as a diagram of the universe—a structure throbbing with life, to be ornamented as a living form.[4] The temple is an organic structure: its elements and surfaces are built up by cellular repetitions, the cells in many cases being miniature duplications of the architectural form itself. In this way each element of the total structure is not only a decorative device but also a miniature shrine (see pls. 227 and 241). A basic concept of Indian philosophy is that the devout worshiper who builds sanctuaries for the gods is performing a sacred act and will be rewarded accordingly. Such a belief may have conditioned the ornament of the temple structure. If merit is gained by building a large temple, might it not be multiplied by incorporating into the design hundreds of miniature temples? It is also interesting to note that the donor's reward depends on the durability of the shrine: the reward for a wooden structure is considerably less than that for a stone one. Another explanation suggests that the home of any individual was determined by his position. That of the great was a wooden house, of the poor a mud hut, but the abodes of the gods were to be indestructible so that they could live forever among their own devotees.

Most of the stone sanctuaries were built through the patronage of great and devoted kings whose prime ambition was to erect temples worthy of their reigns. Often the material and workmen were brought from far distances, and the actual construction of a temple may have taken more than a lifetime. Indian architecture was never the work of a single inspired genius (not even the work of an inspired committee) but was always anonymous, the combined effort of a devout people.

It is not possible to classify Indian architecture according to religious preference because all temple design is essentially similar, with minor modifications. Indian temple architecture is usually classified geographically into the northern, southern, and central (Deccan) areas. The northern architecture is known as Nāgara or Indo-Aryan, the southern as Dravida or Dravidian, and the central as Vesara. The differences between these styles are most obvious in the tower designs. The tower's strong vertical emphasis is the dominant element of the Indo-Aryan temple. The Dravidian tower, a high pyramidal shape, consists of a series of horizontal stories topped by a finial or *stupika* (diminutive stupa) which is repeated in smaller scale on the four corners of each story (see pl. 155). The Vesara temple style combines elements from both the north and south and also adds elements of its own. Some scholars do not mention the Vesara style but classify all temples as either Indo-Aryan or Dravidian, designating temples that do not conform to either as regional in style.

Although we now use a geographical classification, the ancient temple builder was not especially concerned with such distinctions and did not always adhere to the usual style of a given location. For this reason the observer should keep in mind the characteristics of the different styles of architecture rather than just the temple's locale.

Udayagiri (Bhopal)

115. Temple 1, Udayagiri (c. 400)

During the Gupta period the chaitya-hall or temple form appears as a freestanding structure in permanent materials. At Udayagiri, just a few miles from Sāñchī, is an architecture style that combines both constructed and excavated elements. There are twenty "caves" at Udayagiri in various stages of preservation. One belongs to the Jain religion; the rest are Hindu. An inscription in one cave states that it was built during the reign of Chandragupta II (c. 380–414), so these are among some of the earliest existing shrines that contain any structural elements. The rock-cut interiors are plain rectangular cells, but the front façades, with their constructed porticos, are examples of early Gupta architecture. Temple 1, sometimes referred to as the "False Cave," is the only shrine at Udayagiri with its front façade more or less intact. Compared with later Indian architecture it seems crude and primitive, which it is. The pillar form with its vase-and-foliage capital design is an early example of a motif that was later refined and widely used. The massive proportions of the façade and pillared portico seem consistent with the rock ledge into which the interior chamber was cut.

116. Cave 19, façade, Udayagiri (c. 400)

There seems to be some confusion in the numbering of the caves at Udayagiri. The numbers used here are those published by the Information Office of Madhya Pradesh.[5] Cave 19, the largest of those at Udayagiri, is also known as the "Amrita Cave." The doorway is richly carved and beside it is a dvārpāla. In

front of the doorway is a structural portico with three openings; in front of this was once a pillared hall. This plate shows the remains of the four pillars forming the portico, and one of the still-standing columns of the pillared hall is on the right.

117. Cave 19, interior pillar

From an architectural point of view cave 19 is the most advanced in design of those at Udayagiri. Its rock-cut interior is by far the largest (approximately twenty-two by nineteen feet), and instead of being a simple rectangular room, it has four massive pillars in the center area. The fluted capital is rather squat in its proportion, but seems appropriate with the rest of the pillar design.

118–19. Cave 4, doorway and detail, Udayagiri (c. 400)

The design around the door shows a carryover from wood construction and also suggests a torana design. The restrained but elegant carving is typical of the Gupta period.

120. Cave 5, boar incarnation of Vishnu, Udayagiri (c. 400)

By far the most famous cave at Udayagiri, cave 5 contains the boar incarnation of Vishnu. This colossal rock carving shows Vishnu, with the head of a boar and the body of a man, rescuing Prithvī, the earth goddess, from the depths of the ocean.[6] He raises the frail figure of Prithvī on his tusk while he tramples a serpent king with his left foot. Both *devas* (celestial beings) and sages watch the rescue with interest. This is one of the largest and earliest carvings from the Gupta period.

121. Cave 8, the Śeśasayanamūrti of Vishnu, Udayagiri (c. 400)

In this character Vishnu is represented in a human form, sleeping on the coiled serpent Śesha, or Ananta, and floating on the cosmic waters.

Sāñchī

122. Temple 17, Sāñchī (c. 400–425)

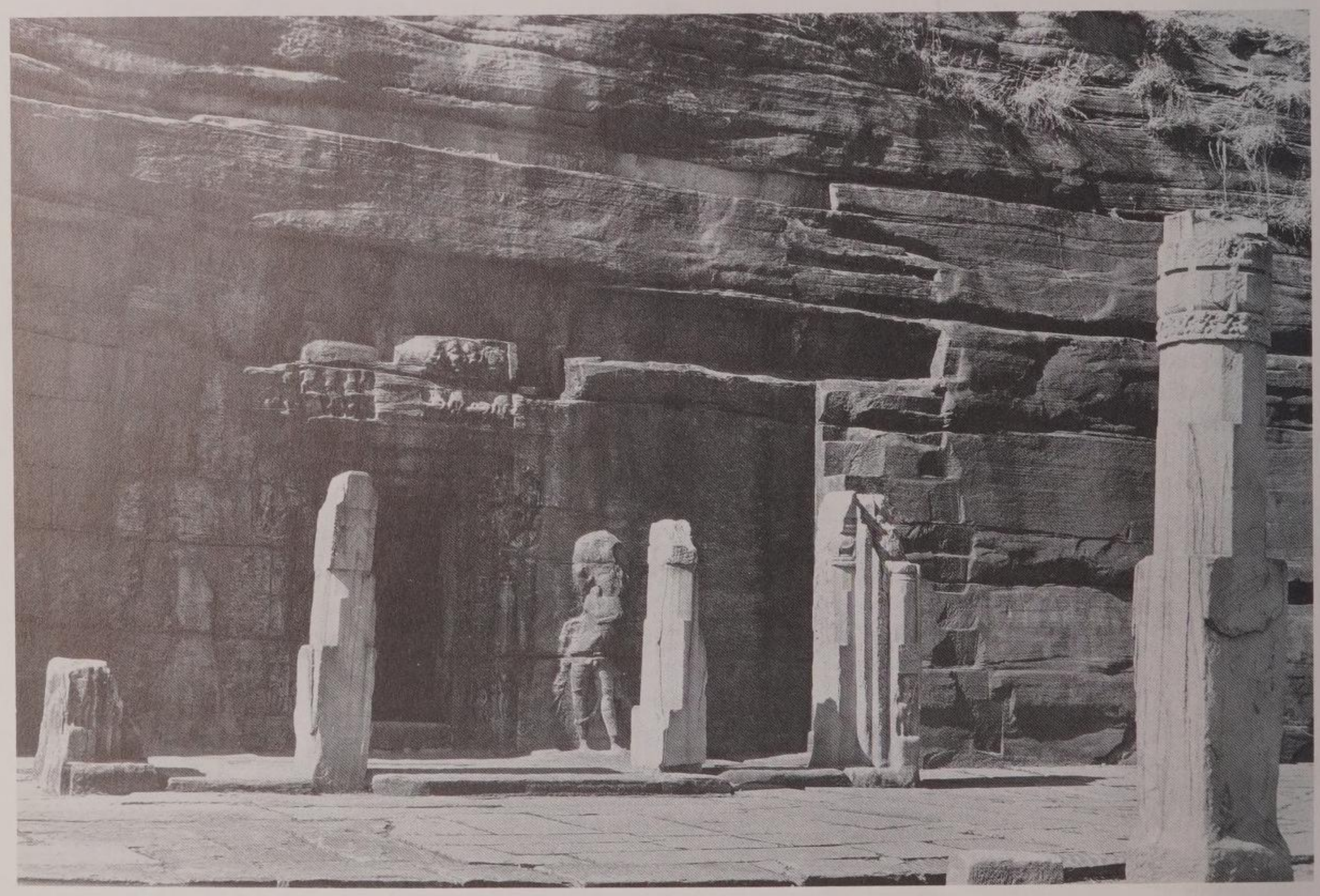
One of the few early constructed shrines that still exists is Temple 17 of Sāñchī. It consists of a single square shrine room, a pillared portico, and on either side of the entrance an engaged column similar to the corner pillars. The interior cell measures 12½ by 12¼ feet and is 13 feet high. The columns show an Aśokan influence (it is just a few yards from the lion-capital gate).

123. Temple 17, detail of column

124. Temple 18, Sāñchī (c. 650)

Some of the still-surviving early stone temples have barrel-vaulted roofs and semicircular ends, a structure similar to the Buddhist rock-cut chaitya-hall. Temple 18 was once such a shrine. All that remain today are the foundations, less than two feet in height of the outer wall of the apse, and some columns. Both the inner and outer walls of the apse are constructed of dry-stone masonry. The columns, which are seventeen feet high and taper slightly toward the top, look as if their carving had never been completed.

115. Temple 1, Udayagiri (Bhopal)



116. Cave 19, façade, Udayagiri

117. Cave 19, interior pillar

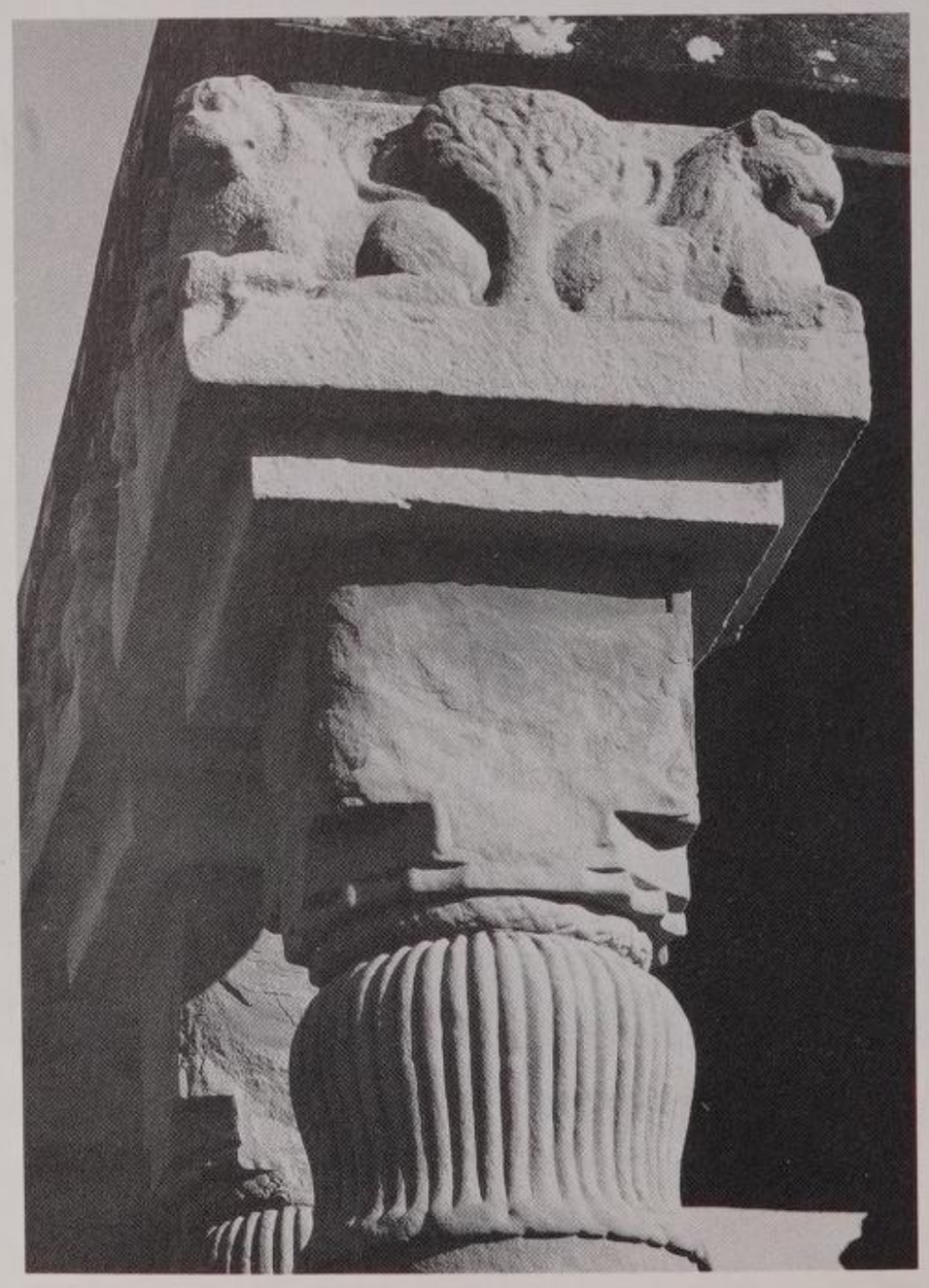
118. Cave 4, doorway, Udayagiri

119. Cave 4, doorway detail, Udayagiri

120. Cave 5, boar incarnation of Vishnu, Udayagiri

121. Cave 8, the Śeśasayanamūrti of Vishnu, Udayagiri

122. Temple 17, Sāñchī



123. Temple 17, column detail

124. Temple 18, Sāñchī

4

Early South Indian Architecture

By the seventh century constructed stone architecture was considerably advanced in most parts of India, but rock-cut architecture continued to be excavated—both in cave and sculptured monolithic form. Two famous sites containing monolithic rock-cut architecture, both Hindu works, are located hundreds of miles apart: one south of Madras at Māmallapuram and the other at Ellorā. Although Māmallapuram is now a small fishing village on the mouth of the Palar River, it was once a flourishing seaport for the Pallavas, whose capital city, Kāñchīpuram, was forty miles upstream. The Pallava dynasty, a great early power of South India, was particularly important for its influence on architecture. Its contribution resulted from two different types of building activity: monolithic rock-cut shrines and structural temples. All that remains of this once-great port is the rock-cut architecture and the famous Shore Temple, but foundations indicate that many other structural buildings once stood here. As was usually true, the religious buildings were in stone (in this case granite) and the others in less permanent materials.

In the seventh century the Pallavas, under Narasiṃha Māmalla, produced at Māmallapuram a group of monolithic shrines, two of which are among the earliest temples in the Dravidian style. The principal monuments consist of several temples or rathas,[1] which were actually sculptured imitations of structural buildings. The forms and decorative elements of some of these stone monoliths are similar to earlier Buddhist shrines. This may indicate that these early Hindu temples borrowed from Buddhism, but it probably indicates that they were influenced by the same early wooden structures that inspired the Buddhists.

Māmallapuram

125–126. Views of the rathas, Māmallapuram (seventh/eighth century)

In plate 125 the following rathas are shown: Draupadī, Arjuna, Bhīma, Dharmarāja, and on the extreme right, Sathadeva. These are all modest in size, the largest being only forty-two feet long and the tallest forty feet high. Three distinct architectural styles are represented in this group of five buildings. Two of them are early examples of the Dravidian style (Arjuna and Dharmarāja), two are examples of a chaitya-hall style (Bhīma and Sathadeva), and one (Draupadī) is totally different. Draupadī, a small one-story square cell with an overhanging arched roof, imitates the thatched roof form of a Bengali hut. Plate 126 shows a back view of the first four temples seen in plate 125.

127. Lion, detail of plate 125

Scattered among the temples of Māmallapuram are carvings of various animals. This massive lion figure has flowing, rhythmical lines, but also conveys a feeling of strength and power.

128. Sathadeva ratha, front façade

This small rock-cut temple might be described as a positive statement of the architectural form seen in the void or negative space of the Buddhist cave temple. The barrel-vaulted roof and the horizontal division beneath it suggest the horseshoe-shaped sun window and balcony. The pillared porch is similar to those found at some cave sites. At one side of the Sathadeva ratha stands a monumental elephant.

129. Sathadeva ratha, back view

The roof design of an apsidal shrine is often called an elephant-back roof, and from this plate it is obvious how it got its name. The similarity of this temple style to that of the chaitya-hall is at once clear.

130. Bull, Māmallapuram (seventh/eighth century)

Some of the finest animal sculpture in India can be found at Māmallapuram. This humped bull is near the five rathas, and even though it was never finished, it is a wonderful presentation of the animal. Plate 130 also shows a little of the granite terrain in the area, which made it an obvious place for the production of monolithic architecture.

131. Draupadī ratha, Māmallapuram (seventh/eighth century)

Draupadī ratha, dedicated to Durgā, is a stone replica of a Bengali thatched hut.[2] On either side of the door two female guardians (dvāra-kunyaka) protect the shrine. Above the door, carved in low relief, is a torana device in the form of a *makara* (crocodile or water serpent).

132–33. Draupadī ratha, details

134. Arjuna ratha, Māmallapuram (seventh/eighth century)

This small shrine, its two-story design crowned by a stupika, may be the origin of the Dravidian style of architecture. It appears to have been finished before the Dharmarāja ratha,[3] which is similar in design but is much larger than this ratha.

135. Arjuna ratha, southeast view

Arjuna ratha, though small, has more exterior carving than any of the other rathas. On three sides are a series of rectangular niches containing bas-relief figures. Krishna, in the center panel of the south side, is flanked by so-called donor couples, and the corner niches contain guardians. Some of the panels on the east side were never finished.

136. Arjuna ratha, niche detail

The human form created by the Pallava stonecarvers is a quiet work of art. The subdued play of light, dark, and halftone in this panel gives the stone a living quality that also suggests tenderness.

137. Arjuna ratha, detail

138. Bhīma ratha, Māmallapuram (seventh/eighth century)

This plate shows the pillared open veranda of Bhīma ratha, as well as the distinctive Pallava seated-lion pillar. On the roof are horseshoe-arch dormerlike projections.

139. Bhīma ratha, gable end

The tactile quality of the granite is clearly indicated in this detail, as is the similarity of the roof to Buddhist cave architecture. The gavāksa motif is apparent in the small design devices. Note that the rural "mailbox" design is in reality the barrel-vaulted roof of a miniature shrine. These shrine devices alternate their size and position so that every other one appears recessed. Above the window is a stupika; around this are brackets, each supporting a lion figure.

140. Dharmarāja ratha, Māmallapuram (seventh/eighth century)

Dharmarāja, dedicated to Śiva, is the tallest and most imposing building of the group. It is one of the best examples of early Dravidian style with its ascending terraced roof and stupika atop the śikhara. The stupika shape is repeated at the four corners of each terrace, a device that was carried on in later Dravidian architecture. Miniature shrines make up the ornament of the tower, but between the shrines are niches holding figures, possibly donor portraits of kings and queens.

141. Dharmarāja ratha, detail

These two sensitively carved figures of Śiva show him as Śiva and as Ardhanārīśvara (half-male and

half-female). At a very early period in India creative energy was considered a female complement. In the figure on the left Śiva is shown as half-male and half-female, a complete union of Śiva and his creative energy. In this dual aspect he becomes both primeval parents of the universe. In the right figure Śiva holds his right hand in the protecting pose. Both figures have a quiet dignity and serenity that is typical of the Māmallapuram carvings.

142. Ganesha ratha, Māmallapuram (seventh/eighth century)
This ratha, set apart from the others, is the most complete of the group, and is dedicated to the elephant-headed god, Ganesh. Ganesh ratha is sometimes credited with being the prototype for the towering South India gate form *(gopuram)*.

143. Ādi-Varāha Cave, Māmallapuram (seventh/eighth century)
This cave-shrine is a typical Pallava design. The lion pillar, a Pallava device, shows a well-developed style—cushion capital, faceted pillar, and lion base. It is interesting to compare this simple lion pillar to the later fantastic animal pillars of South India.

144–45. Adi-Varāha Cave, pillar details

146. Fragment detail, Māmallapuram (seventh/eighth century)
Gāngā, the river goddess, is shown in this rhythmical composition on her vehicle, a makara. She is framed by serpentine forms that terminate in a lotus bud on the right side. Enclosed in the circle at the top is a nāginī.

147. The Descent of the Ganges, Māmallapuram (seventh/eighth century)
This gigantic relief panel is made up of numerous life-sized figures—including the elephants. Approximately thirty feet high and eighty-eight feet long, it is divided near the center by a vertical fault in the rock. It is said that a stream of water once ran down this fault, simulating the Ganges. The subject of the panel is a thanksgiving by all creatures, great and small, for the miraculous gift of the Ganges. The Pancha Pandava Cave is seen at the far left in the plate.

148. The Descent of the Ganges, fault detail
In the rock's center cleft, which represents the Ganges River, are a great nāga king with his queen below. Their heads are framed by huge cobra hoods and their bodies end in serpentine coils. From both sides deities, mortals, demigods, and animals hurry to observe the miracle and worship the Ganges. Even a cat and some mice (below the elephant's tusk) are joining in this happy event. The bearded figure on the top left standing on one leg and lifting his arms upward is the holy sage Bhagīratha, who, by performing a series of amazing austerities, gained the favor of the river goddess, Gāngā. She agreed to descend to earth, and when Bhagīratha performed further austerities, Śiva broke the fall of the river so that it would not crush and destroy the earth.

149. The Descent of the Ganges, general view
The large elephant represents the celestial elephant Airāvata, Indra's vehicle, who was attempting with his mammoth body to block the descent of the Ganges. The figures above the elephant are flying toward the sacred river. The raised arm and the legs in a half-crouching and half-kneeling position indicate that the figure is flying.

150. The Shore Temple, Māmallapuram (early eighth century)
From the unfinished condition of some of the rock-cut architecture at Māmallapuram one might assume that some catastrophe had stopped all work, but that apparently was not the case. It is generally assumed that after the death of Narasiṃha there was little interest in rock-cut architecture and attention was now turned to structural building, the Pallavas' second big contribution. Rājasiṃha initiated this type of architecture when he succeeded to the throne, and it continued through the eighth century. Three important buildings from this period are the Shore Temple at Māmallapuram and the Kailāsanātha and Vaikuntha Perumāl temples at Kāñchīpuram. The Shore Temple, one of the earliest surviving structural

buildings of the Pallavas, reveals an advanced technique in its construction. The Indian builders used dry masonry plus iron dowels to hold the blocks of stone together. Occasionally some other material was used, evidently as a cement. Their buildings, however, achieved strength through mass supporting mass and stability by weight pressing downward. The Shore Temple, situated in the sand on the very edge of the water, was designed so that the door of the cella, facing east toward the sea, would be lighted by the first rays of the rising sun. The temple compound is on a slightly raised platform enclosed by a low wall that is topped with reclining bulls. Although the pyramidal towers of both the main shrine and the smaller building show a marked similarity to the Dharmarāja ratha, they are proportionately higher and more slender, producing a lighter silhouette with a definite vertical emphasis. The jagged edge of the base visible on the right side of this plate indicates that the sea has taken its toll.

151. The Shore Temple, detail of bulls

This plate shows some of the reclining bulls on the top of the wall. This temple is dedicated to Śiva and the bull, Nandi, is Śiva's vehicle.

152. The Shore Temple, northwest detail

The early Pallava design device, the seated-lion pillar, here has become a rampant lion. This foreshortened view makes the tower very similar to that of the Dharmarāja ratha. The outside walls contain some badly eroded decorative panels.

153. The Shore Temple, detail

This seriously eroded panel is on the north side of the smaller building.

154. The Shore Temple, west façade

The off-center arrangement of the two separate structures is clearly indicated here. The smaller building is variously called a maṇḍapa, a small building, or a Nandi shrine. The fact that it has a reclining bull above the entrance would seem to indicate a Nandi shrine.

155. The Shore Temple, tower detail

The octagonal stupika and the repeated miniature temple design forming the individual units that make up the total composition of the tower are similar to those of the Dharmarāja ratha. Note too the continued use of the horseshoe- or chaitya-arch design.

Kāñchīpuram

156. Kailāsanātha Temple, Kāñchīpuram (early eighth century)

Approximately contemporary with the Shore Temple is another Śiva dedication, the Kailāsanātha of Kāñchīpuram. This view of the sanctuary shows a series of small shrines across the front and a gate structure with a barrel-vaulted roof that runs parallel to the row of shrines. The pyramidal tower of the main shrine is proportionately broader than that of the Shore Temple and the horizontal terracing is less pronounced. This temple was originally built with a separate flat-roofed maṇḍapa, but later the two buildings were joined. Surrounding the temple complex is a walled rectangular courtyard. The shrine itself, though more elaborate, is similar to Dharmarāja ratha.

157. Kailāsanātha Temple, detail

There are six small shrines on one side of the gate and two on the other. Here is a close view of three shrines to the right of the entrance gate. Within each small shrine is a polished stone *lingam* (phallic emblem of Śiva).

158. Kailāsanātha Temple, wall detail

The seated- and rampant-lion pillar became the hallmark of Pallava architecture. (This wall section shows engaged rampant lion pillars.) From early times it has been a common practice in South India to cover the stone with plaster, and many of the following plates show remaining patches of plaster as well as much of the bare stone.

159. Kailāsanātha Temple, interior view of temple compound

One of the most important features of the Kailāsanātha Temple plan is the broad ambulatory that encircles the main shrine and is enclosed with small stupika-crowned temples. All of these small shrines contain stone representations of the various forms of Śiva, thus making the Kailāsanātha complex one of the largest and most complete collections of Śiva iconography.[4]

160. Kailāsanātha Temple, doorway detail

This view of a doorway indicates the direction Dravidian architectural ornament was to take. Every surface was considered a possible place for ornamentation. This plate shows, in addition to the guard beside the door, a band of small guardians across the lintel that are treated in a light-hearted fashion.

161–63. Kailāsanātha Temple, Śiva figures

The figures in plates 161 and 162 are on the front façade of the maṇḍapa. Here the plaster coating is fairly new and the carving is uniformly covered. The character of the stone has disappeared and the ornament reflects the plaster coating, more or less as icing ornaments a cake. The three figures in these plates are elegant figures with their elaborate headdresses and extravagant jewelry. Above the central figure in plates 161–62 is a small Ganesh. At the bottom of both plates are two small attendants with fly-whisks. Plate 163 shows a powerful figure, which is emphasized by the relative simplicity of the area around him.

164–65. Kailāsanātha Temple, details of Śiva figures

Fortunately the plaster that once covered the detail in plate 164 has weathered away. Here is work with the same sculptural quality as that found at Māmallapuram. Śiva is seated with his arm resting on the head of his bull, Nandi. Although badly eroded, the natural and fluid quality of the sculpture is obvious.

The seated Śiva figure of plate 165, with his broad shoulders and massive arms, seems to radiate strength. He also has an earthy or peasant quality that makes him look as if he were related to a Mexican peon—a fact that may result from his sombrerolike hair treatment.

166. Kailāsanātha Temple, detail

This charming figure is undoubtedly of royal rank, a fact made clear by the fly-whisks suspended above his head. He is holding lotus buds and above one of them is a conch shell, two devices that are associated with Vishnu.

167. Vaikuntha Perumāl Temple, Kāñchīpuram (c. 750–800)

This Vishnu temple, slightly smaller than the Kailāsanātha, is perhaps the best example of the mature Pallava style. For the first time in Pallava architecture the sanctuary, porch, and assembly area are treated as a unified whole. The interior of the wall surrounding the total structure is a roofed, columned hall that forms an ambulatory going completely around the shrine. Another new feature of Pallava architecture is a maṇḍapa crowned with a dome. The lion pilasters relate well to the rest of the architecture. The result is a slightly more elegant temple than Kailāsanātha.

168. Vaikuntha Perumāl Temple, detail of pillars

The seated-lion pillars of this plate indicate a marked refinement over similar pillars at Māmallapuram. The pillared façade of the ambulatory is relatively simple, a fact that is appreciated since the wall back of the pillars is covered with low-relief carving depicting scenes of the political history of the Pallavas. Fortunately these pillars were not covered with plaster and the character of the stone is revealed.

Ellorā (Kailāsanātha Temple)

169. Kailāsanātha Temple, entrance gate, Ellorā (c. 750–800)

The most famous example of Indian monolithic rock-cut architecture is the Kailāsanātha of Ellorā. This Śiva sanctuary, a work undertaken by the Rāshtrakūta dynasty, was excavated by cutting into the rock cliff three great trenches that formed three sides of a rectangle and left standing a huge single mountain of rock (c. 276 by 154 by 96 feet high). From this the Kailāsanātha complex was formed. A big disadvantage to such a method of producing a temple is that it is surrounded on three sides by high cliffs and becomes

an island in a huge hole. As in cave architecture, the work proceeded from the top down, and research indicates that the craftsmen completed all work as they continued down the huge block of stone. Producing a monumental piece of architecture in this fashion seems near impossible, but scholars have pointed out many times that this probably involved less work than would have been required to quarry and transport the stone for a constructed building.

The temple takes its name from Mount Kailāsa in the Himalayas and is intended to be an architectural replica of this sacred mountain, the summit of which is Śiva's home. The temple compound includes an entrance gate, a Nandi shrine, and the huge main temple, as well as two great pylons and two life-sized elephants in the courtyard. Cut into the rock cliff surrounding three sides of the temple are additional sanctuaries and cells. Most of the architectural elements in this huge undertaking are Dravidian in style. The plates that follow, particularly the figurative panels, show that the carving has become much deeper than that of earlier work, and in some cases figures are practically in the round. The Kailāsanātha Temple of Ellorā, considered by some to be the greatest single work of art executed in India, is without a doubt unrivaled anywhere as an example of rock-cut architecture. It is ornamented with thousands of decorative devices including flowers, birds, animals, gods, and demigods. The few plates shown here are only a very brief introduction to the total work.

The huge entrance gate and the terrain of the area are clearly indicated on plate 169. Note that the gate structure, actually a screen wall, has a barrel-vaulted roof with chaitya-type ends. This is the same arrangement as that of the Kailāsanātha Temple of Kāñchīpuram, except that here is a much larger production.[5]

170. Kailāsanātha Temple, southwest view

A view from the southwest shows the southern pylon and the south façade of the Nandi temple (left). The bridge that joins the Nandi shrine with the main temple is visible above the stair entrance to the left of the pylon. The maṇḍapa, a large, sixteen-pillared hall, and its porch are visible just behind and to the right of the pylon. The terrain from which the massive block was cut and some of the surrounding vertical cliff is visible at the top. Only a section of the total complex is shown here, but it gives an idea of the staggering magnitude of the project. This plate also suggests how the temple compound becomes an island at the bottom of a huge hole.

171. Kailāsanātha Temple, tower detail

This view from the south shows a pyramidal, terraced roof with a heavy overhang reminiscent of the "Bengali-hut" style of Draupadī ratha.

172. Kailāsanātha Temple, southeast view

This bird's-eye view from the top of the cliff at the back of the shrine helps one understand the relationship and size of the various units—vimāna, maṇḍapa, Nandi shrine, and gate.

173. Kailāsanātha Temple, north pylon

This view of the north pylon shows the vertical cliff beyond, with part of the Lankeśvara Cave cut into it. The great overhanging rock seems to dwarf the cave.

174. Kailāsanātha Temple, north pylon detail

The weathered stone of the pylon is an interesting contrast to the roughcut stone of the cliff beyond. The horseshoe arch associated with earlier architecture is a prominent design device on both Kailāsanātha pylons.

175–76. Kailāsanātha Temple, wall details

Typical of the architectural ornament are these niches created by pilasters and entablatures, with each niche framing a figure. The three-headed figure in plate 175 portrays Śiva as the supreme God: Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer. Small patches of plaster still adhere to the stone, and in plate 175 a small painted geometric design is still intact. Plate 176 includes other Śiva figures.

177. Kailāsanātha Temple, Vishnu and Garuda

In this panel Garuda (Vishnu's vehicle) is shown in human form with wings, rather than half-man and half-bird. On the two sides above are flying couples and divine personages. The figures all seem to be hovering in space.

178. Kailāsanātha Temple, Durgā, slayer of the Titan buffalo

Durgā is the name commonly given to the fierce form of Devi (the feminine element of Śiva as Creator). In this panel she is on her tiger, attacking Mahisha, the buffalo demon. Mahisha has a human face and body and is holding a mace ready to attack the goddess. Watching the event with interest are various deities.

179. Kailāsanātha Temple, Shrine of the River Goddesses

This small cave-shrine carved in the north wall is dedicated to the river goddesses Gāngā, Yamunā (Jumnā), and Sarasvatī. On both sides are guardians and in the courtyard in front of the cave is one of the huge stone elephants, a small part of which is in deep shadow on the right of the plate.

180–81. Kailāsanātha Temple, river goddesses Sarasvatī and Yamunā

In the Shrine of the River Goddesses are three similar niches containing figures of Sarasvatī, Gāngā, and Yamunā. Shown here are Yamunā (pl. 180), standing on a tortoise, and Sarasvatī (pl. 181), standing on a lotus. Both figures are framed in a toranalike structure consisting of pillars surmounted by an arch. In the background are twining vines and rhythmical aquatic plants that seem to move and sway as if in currents of water. The goddess figures, cut in high relief against this background, stand out as wonderful presentations of the female figure.

182. Kailāsanātha Temple, Śiva as Bhairava

Śiva, as Bhairava, takes a violent form to rid the world of evil, here symbolized by Gajasura (the elephant demon). As the god of destruction, Śiva performs his task of destroying the demon, not as an avenger, but with total philosophic detachment. The sculptor has attempted to show this by having Śiva caress Pārvatī, his consort, with his lower left hand while he is engaged in this great feat.[6] In this violent form Śiva becomes ten-handed, the large number of hands designating his great power. Śiva decides to destroy the demon by exposing him to the heat of the sun, but in order to do this he must protect himself. This he does by using an elephant skin as an umbrella, which he holds above his head with his top pair of hands. The panel suggests power and movement.

183. Kailāsanātha Temple, Śiva as Māhāyogi

Śiva, the great ascetic (Māhāyogi), is seated on a lotus platform in deep meditation *(yoga)*. He has an elaborate headdress and jewels about his neck. At his side are sadhus trying to meditate and musicians playing their instruments. The noise and confusion do not disturb Śiva's intense concentration. In the top part of the panel are various deities and their vehicles. This is a marked contrast to plate 182.

184. Kailāsanātha Temple, Narasiṃha avatar

Vishnu's fourth incarnation was brought about so that he could free the world of the demon king, Hiraṇuakásipu. In this incarnation Vishnu, half-man and half-lion, is usually shown in Indian iconography with a lion head and human body. The force of the struggle and Narasiṃha's superior strength are clearly evident. Note the architectural elements framing the episode.

185. Kailāsanātha Temple, cave-shrine pillar detail

This elaborate and massive pillar is in the Lankeśvara cave-shrine. The detail shown here rests on a relatively simple square base. Dwarf or Atlas-type figures support the ornament at each corner. The general effect is a square box enclosing a spherical shape, the square box being pierced through, and the fluted, bulbous shape being silhouetted against the voids. It is massive and richly ornamented.

186. Kailāsanātha Temple, the abduction of Sitā

The story of this panel, also called the Jatāyu panel, is that of the bird Jatāyu attempting to save Sitā,

wife of Rāma, who is being abducted by the demon Rāvana. Jatāya is biting Rāvana's leg, and Sitā is in the chariot that Rāvana carries on his back. The flying Rāvana and the bird make a rhythmical contrast to the straight lines of the chariot.

187–88. Kailāsanātha Temple, Śiva Natarājā

Two dancing Śiva figures, very different in composition, are shown in these plates. The movement and rhythm of Śiva Natarājā is related to the eternal movement and rhythm of the universe—a cosmic dance. Plate 187 shows a very forceful dancing Śiva. The strenuous movement of the figure plus the number of arms produces a restless, violent composition. Pārvatī is seated on Śiva's left and a musician on his right. Plate 188 is a much quieter presentation of the dancing Śiva. Here he has only four arms and the body movement is quite subdued, somehow suggesting introspection or an inward-looking concern. It is interesting to note that the pilasters that frame this figure are ornately carved at the top and relatively plain at the bottom, a fact that emphasizes the simple, easy motion of the dancer.

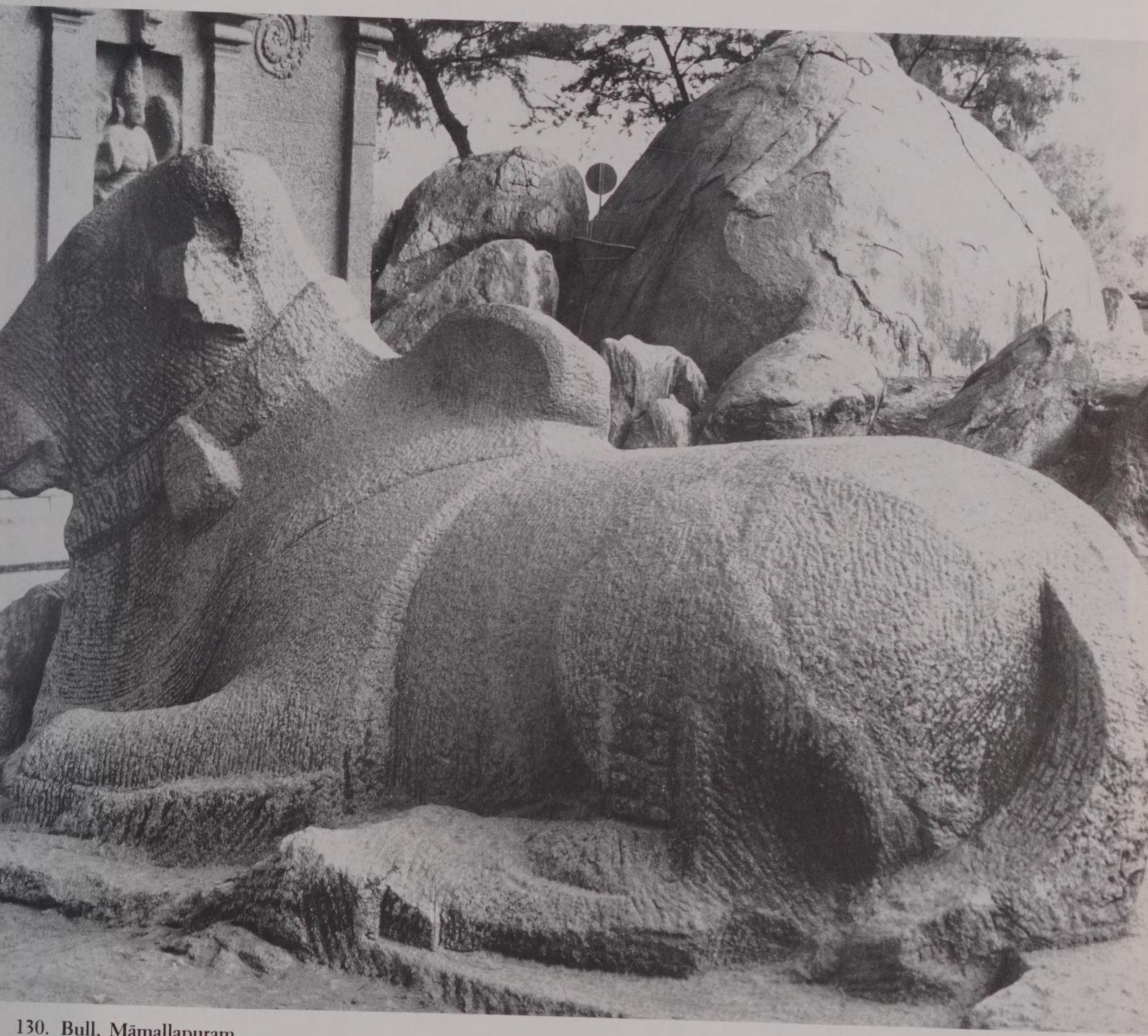
189. Kailsāsanātha Temple, pillar detail

The roof of the main hall at Kailāsanātha is supported by sixteen huge carved pillars. The low-relief carving in this pillar is in marked contrast to that of the pillars in other areas of the temple. Small bits of white plaster remaining in the deeper-cut areas accentuate parts of the design in the dimly lighted hall. Note the chaitya-type arch that frames a huge bird.

125. View of rathas, Māmallapuram

127. Lion, detail of plate 125

128. Sathadeva ratha, front façade



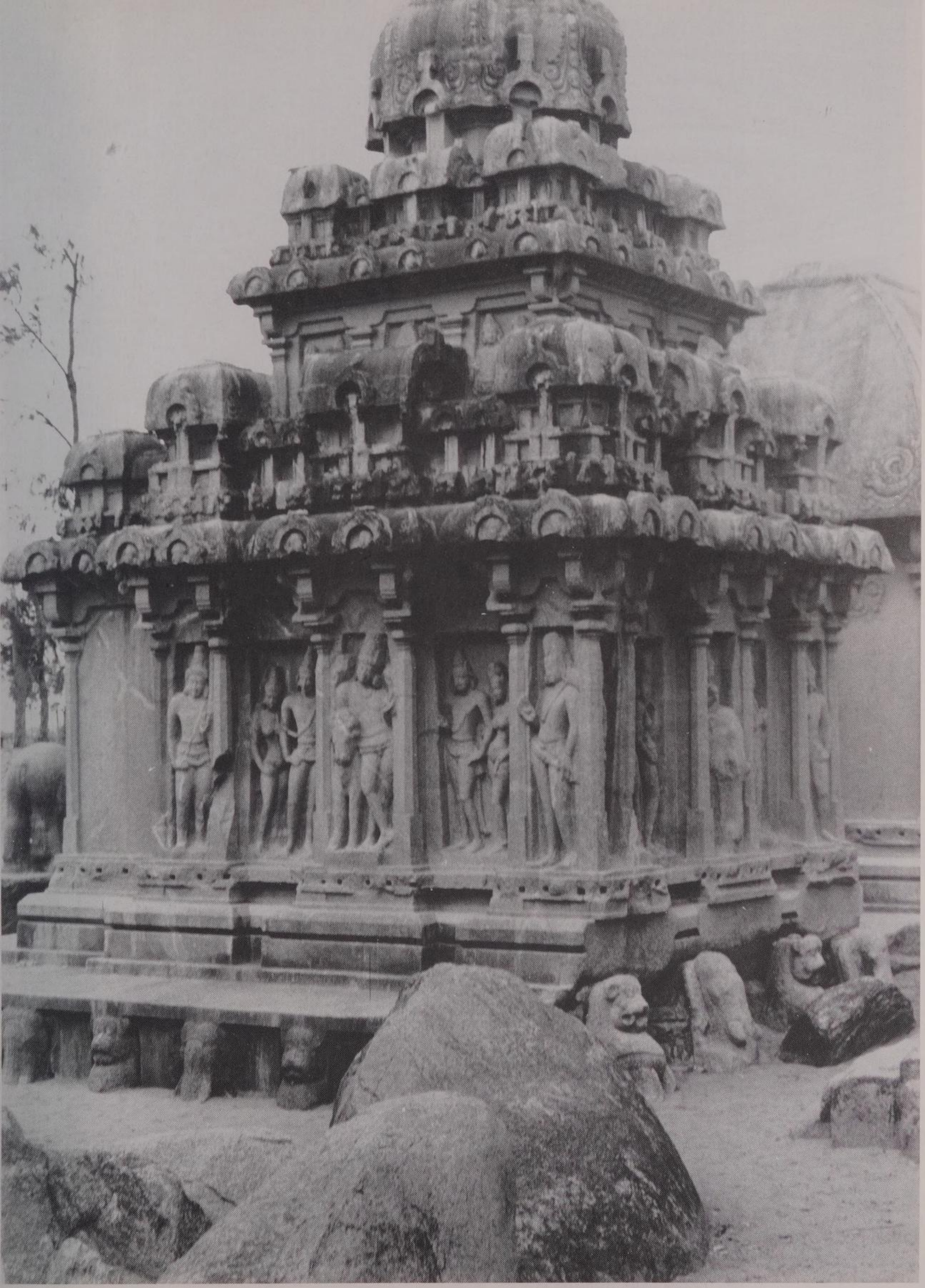
130. Bull, Māmallapuram

131. Draupadī ratha, Māmallapuram

132. Draupadī ratha, detail

133. Draupadī ratha, detail

134. Arjuna ratha, Māmallapuram

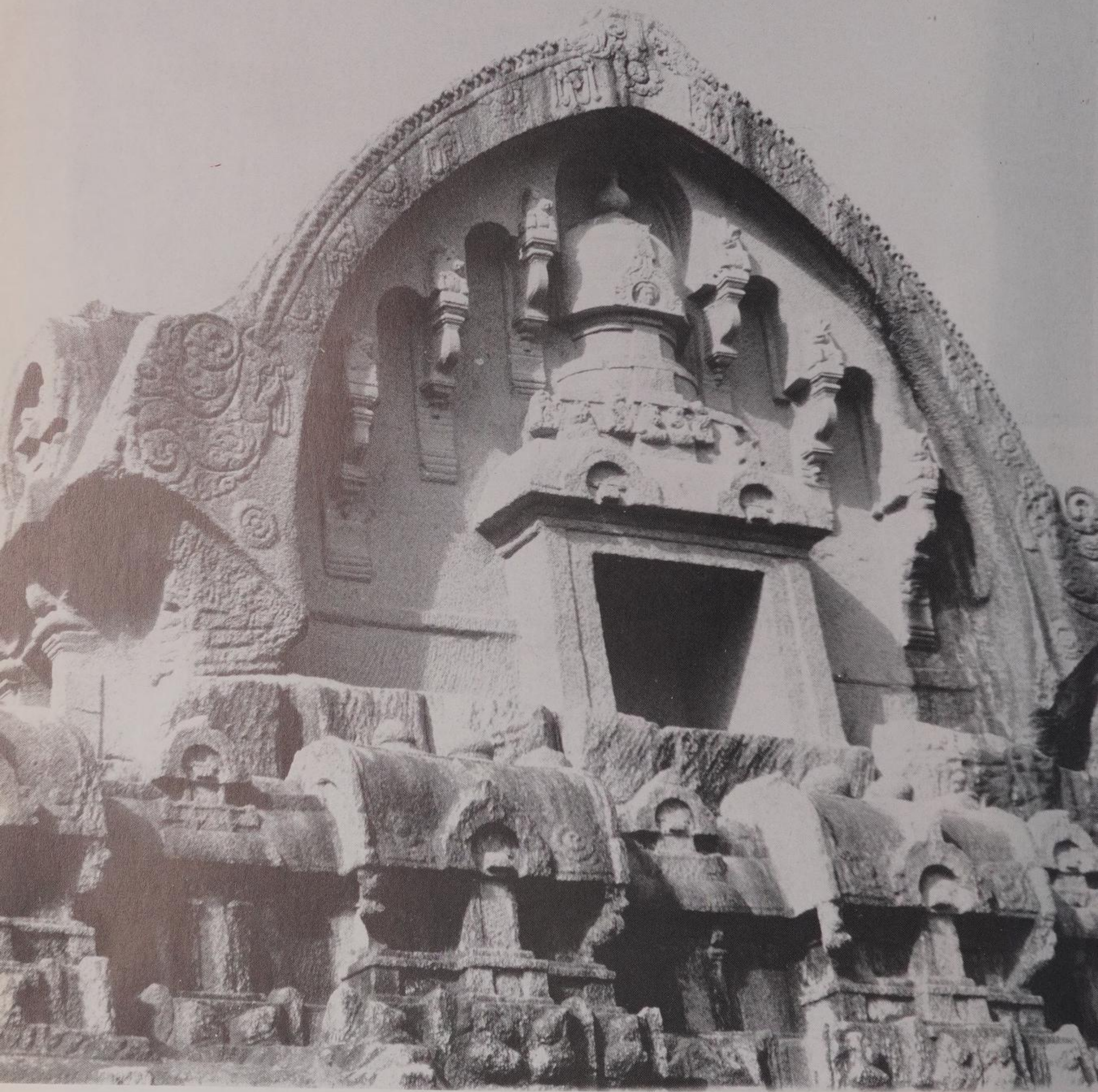


135. Arjuna ratha, Māmallapuram

136. Arjuna ratha, niche detail

137. Arjuna ratha, detail

138. Bhīma ratha, Māmallapuram



139. Bhīma ratha, gable end

140. Dharmarāja ratha, Māmallapuram

141. Dharmarāja ratha, detail

142. Ganesha ratha, Māmallapuram

143. Ādi-Varāha Cave, Māmallapuram

144. Ādi-Varāha Cave, detail

145. Ādi-Varāha Cave, detail

146. Fragment detail, Māmallapuram

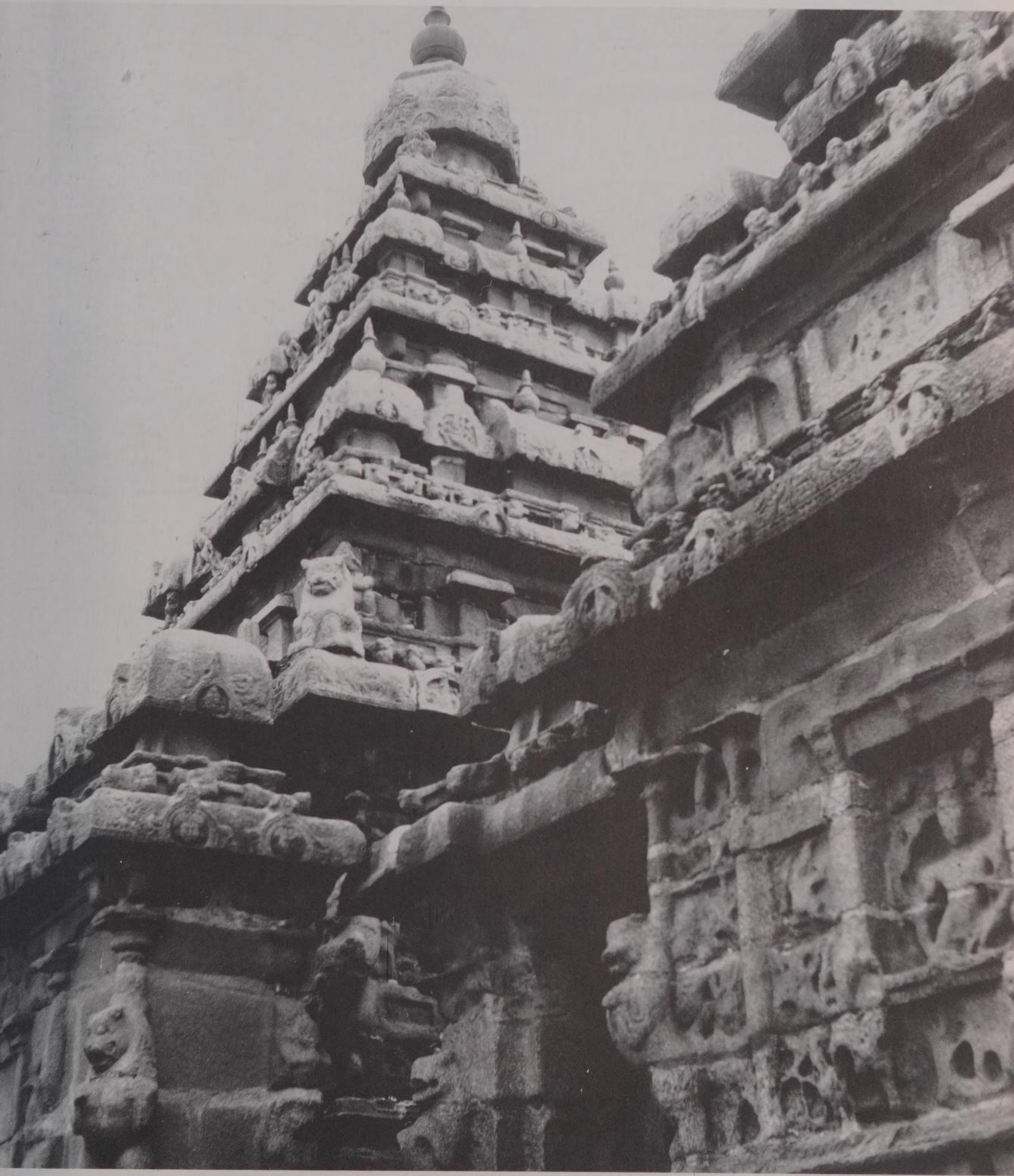
147. The Descent of the Ganges, Māmallapuram

148. The Descent of the Ganges, fault detail

149. The Descent of the Ganges, general view

150. The Shore Temple, Māmallapuram

151. The Shore Temple, detail

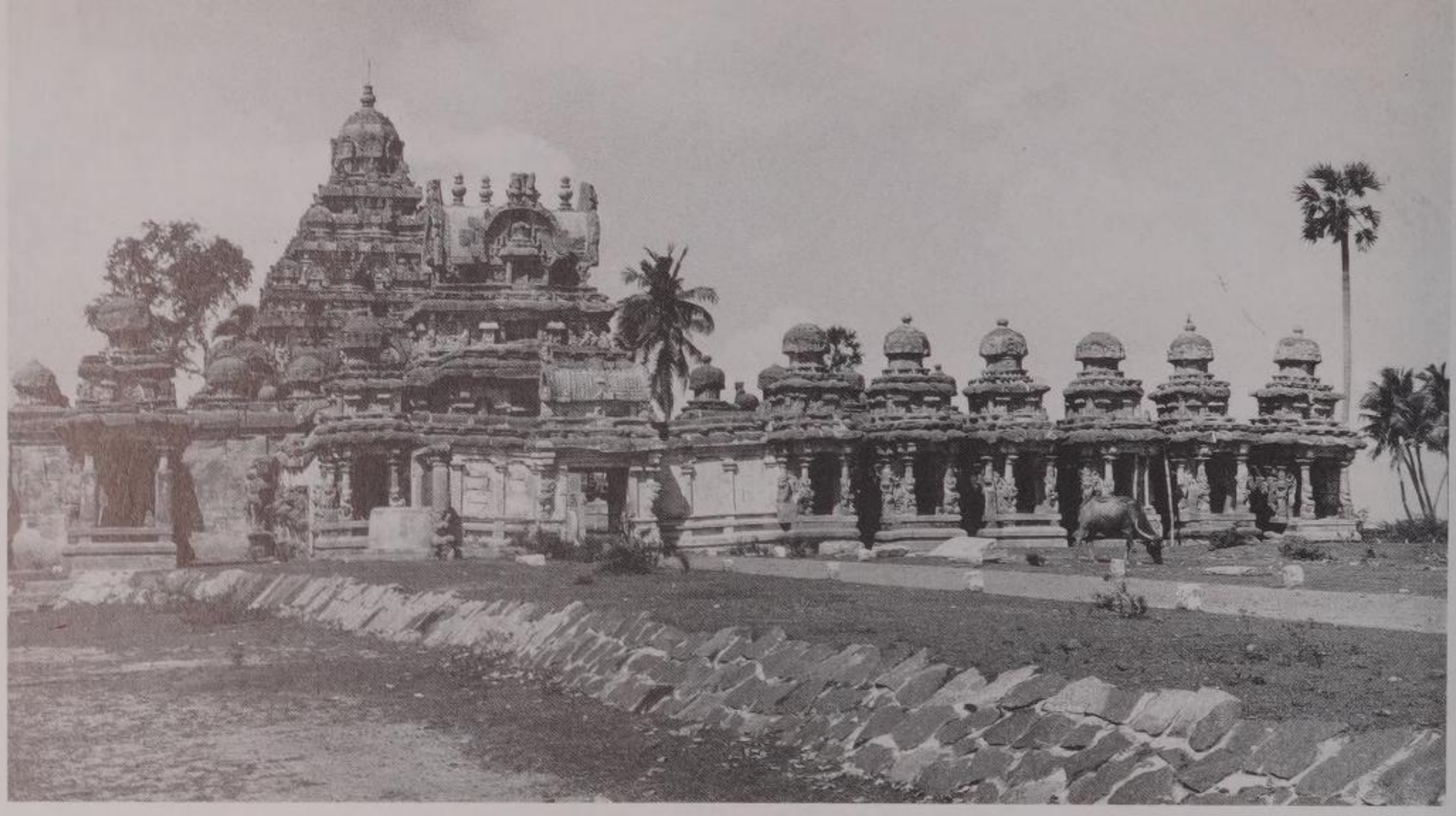


152. The Shore Temple, northwest detail

153. The Shore Temple, detail

154. The Shore Temple, west façade

he Shore Temple, tower detail



156. Kailāsanātha Temple, Kāñchīpuram

157. Kailāsanātha Temple, detail

158. Kailāsanātha Temple, wall detail

159. Kailāsanātha Temple, interior view of compound

160. Kailāsanātha Temple, doorway detail

161. Kailāsanātha Temple, Śiva figure

162. Kailāsanātha Temple, Śiva figure

163. Kailāsanātha Temple, Śiva figure

164. Kailāsanātha Temple, detail of Śiva figures

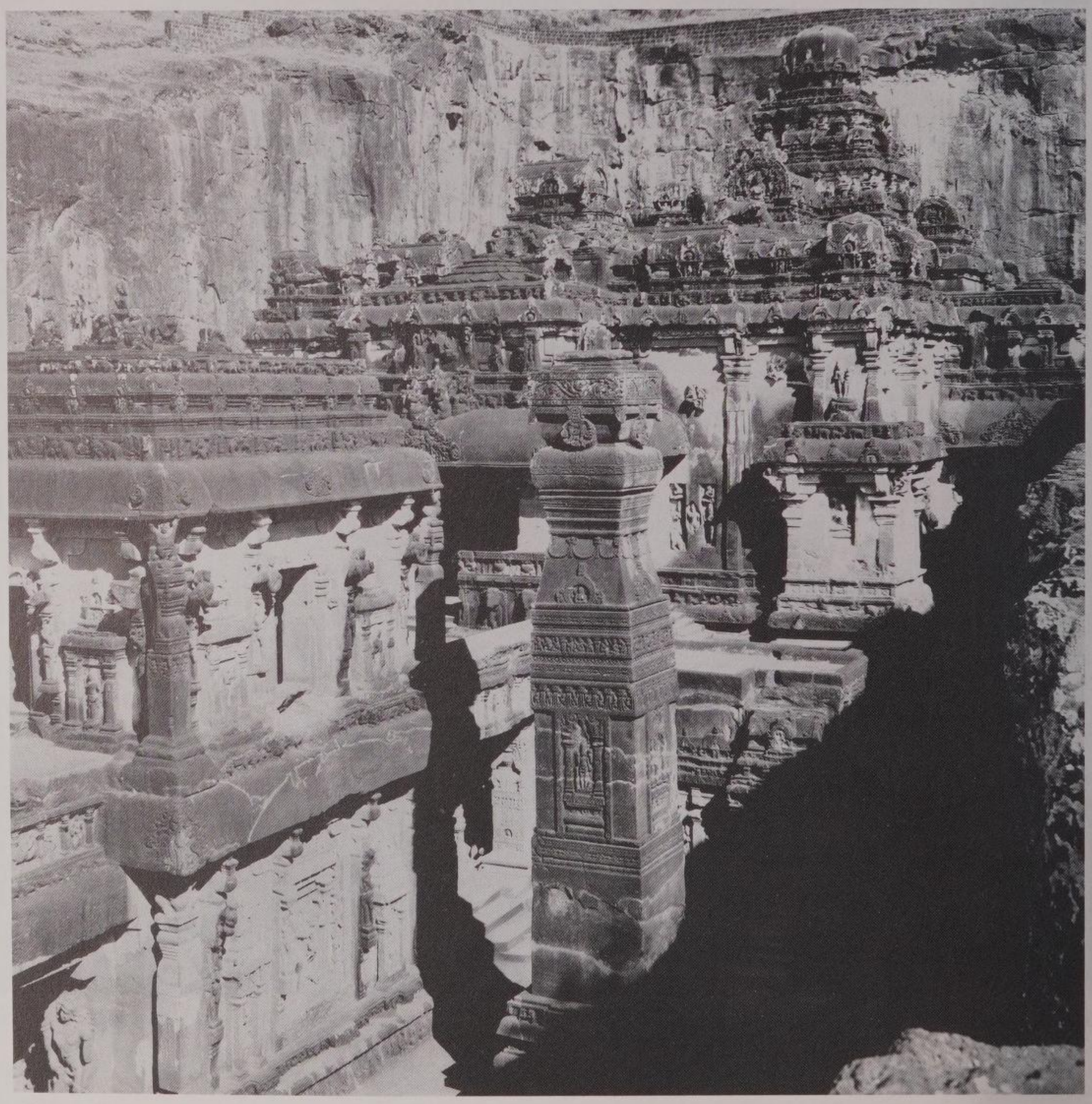
165. Kailāsanātha Temple, detail of Śiva figures

166. Kailāsanātha Temple, detail

167. Vaikuntha Perumāl Temple, Kāñchīpuram

168. Vaikuntha Perumāl Temple, pillar detail

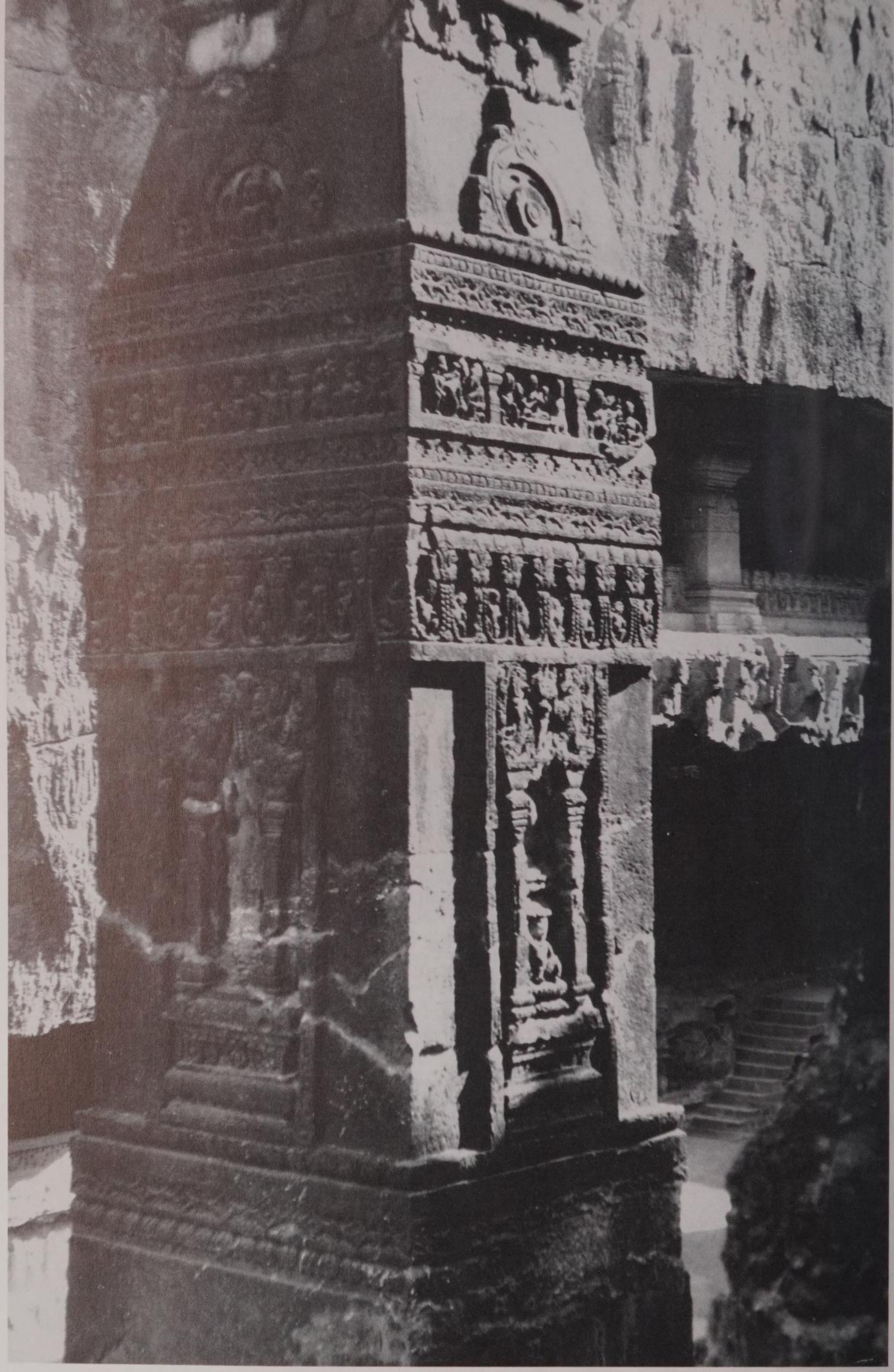
169. Kailāsanātha Temple, entrance gate, Ellorā



170. Kailāsanātha Temple, southwest view

171. Kailāsanātha Temple, tower detail

172. Kailāsanātha Temple, southeast view



173. Kailāsanātha Temple, north pylon

174. Kailāsanātha Temple, north pylon detail

175. Kailāsanātha Temple, wall detail

176. Kailāsanātha Temple, wall detail

177. Kailāsanātha Temple, Vishnu and Garuda

178. Kailāsanātha Temple, Durgā

179. Kailāsanātha Temple, Shrine of the River Goddesses

180. Kailāsanātha Temple, river goddess

181. Kailāsanātha Temple, river goddess

182. Kailāsanātha Temple, Śiva as Bhairava

183. Kailāsanātha Temple, Śiva as Māhāyogi

184. Kailāsanātha Temple, Narasiṃha avatar

185. Kailāsanātha Temple, detail of pillar in cave-shrine

86. Kailāsanātha Temple, Sitā abduction

187. Kailāsanātha Temple, Śiva Natarājā

188. Kailāsanātha Temple, Śiva Natarājā

189. Kailāsanātha Temple, pillar detail

5
Post-Gupta and Later Architecture

ALTHOUGH THE GREAT PERIOD OF THE GUPTA KINGS ENDED IN 467 WITH THE DEATH OF SKANdagupta, the dynasty continued in the Bihār area, but it was no longer an imperial power. Because of the continuing influence of the art forms developed during the Gupta era, most authorities extend the period, some scholars dating the end in the midsixth century, others the midseventh century. Art produced beyond these dates is called post-Gupta. Fortunately great trends do not turn on and off due to political changes. Because the Gupta aesthetic had been so firmly ingrained in the consciousness of the artists, it continued well into the post-Gupta period and beyond.

The last major development of the North Indian temple occurred in the tenth century. This may have resulted in part from a great resurgence in the Hindu religion. The temple design seems to have become the ultimate expression of the devout Hindu's religious fervor. The śikara became more ornate, multiplying itself as it rose upward. Towers appeared above each of the temple units, culminating in a great tower above the shrine room. The outside walls were covered with multitudes of gods, demigods, and celestial beings, and processions of various animals and ornament left very few plain surfaces. Somehow all these elements successfully coalesced to produce a marvelous temple that met the spiritual needs of the devotees.

Gwalior Fort (Teli-ka-Mandir)

190. Teli-ka-Mandir, entrance gate, Gwalior Fort (c. 700–750)

The history of Gwalior is said to be the history of its fort, which under various Rājput kings has played an important role in Indian history. Some authorities date the fort in the seventh century, but a booklet on Gwalior published by the Indian government points out that the earliest historical mention of the fort is found in an inscription dated 525 A.D. on a temple dedicated to the sun, which was built in the reign of the Hun (Huna) Emperor Mihirakula.[1] Within the compound of the buttelike fortress are several surviving buildings, the earliest important one being a temple called Teli-ka-Mandir, which means "oilman's temple"—a name for which there seems to be no explanation. The dates for this shrine are variously given from the eighth century to the end of the eleventh. The Sas-Bahu temples, the two remaining important buildings, are dated 1093 from an inscription found on the larger of the two. Apparently Teli-ka-Mandir is also thought to be from the eleventh century, although it is totally different in style and appears to be a much older building. Louis Frederic points out that the sculpture and other ornament that appears on the building is clearly post-Gupta, so it should be dated between the eighth and ninth centuries.[2] The ornament and general appearance of the structure would tend to place it in the eighth century and not at the end of the eleventh. For this reason I am placing it in the eighth century.[3] Teli-ka-Mandir is a structure whose design reflects the chaitya-hall, and the use of a torana is also reminiscent of Buddhist architecture. The bands of ornamental carving on the gate are perhaps not as fluid as the best design of the Gupta period, but they carry over much of the elegance found at that time.

191. Teli-ka-Mandir, general view

Teli-ka-Mandir combines elements from both the southern and northern styles of architecture, but it also has a barrel-vaulted roof. It is sometimes compared with the little Vaitāl Deul at Bhubaneśvar, an Orissan temple that has a similar type of roof. This plate shows one of the chaitya-arch ends of the roof, immediately suggesting the sun window of the cave temples. The horseshoe arch or gavāksa design is used

as an ornamental device throughout the building. The design above the niches on either side of the door is similar to the Indo-Aryan śikhara found in Orissa. Teli-ka-Mandir is sixty feet long, forty feet wide, and eighty feet high. It has no maṇḍapa, only the vimāna, or shrine room, and the ambulatory that may be entered from the front, sides, or back of the building.

192. Teli-ka-Mandir, detail of façade

This detail indicates how the horseshoe arch was used in varying sizes and proportions to build up an organized composition. It is interesting to compare this detail with Viśvakarman chaitya-hall (cave 10) at Ellorā. The use of recessed and projecting elements adds interest by emphasizing the play of light and shadow.

193. Teli-ka-Mandir, doorway niche

As I mentioned earlier, the niches on both sides of the door suggest the śikhara form of an Orissan temple. Here again the dominance of the gavāksa motif is obvious in this detail to the right of the door.

194. Teli-ka-Mandir, detail of doorway

The combination of vertical and horizontal bands produces a composition of rectangular shapes—all within one large rectangle surmounted by an elaborate honeycomb design of gavāksa motifs. The vertical bands on either side of the door are simple and restrained, and although the figures have been badly damaged, they still retain their graceful, rhythmical form and movement. The small groups of disklike objects immediately above the doorway suggest the finial or crown *(āmalaka)* of an Indo-Aryan śikhara.

195. Teli-ka-Mandir, detail of plate 194

This honeycomb gavāksa design indicates the detail involved in its creation. Inside each arch can be seen a series of receding pointed arches similar to a trefoil. The deep recessing gives an interesting play of light and shadow, and the beading is an excellent unifying device. The horizontal band at the top with the diamond and lotus design is reminiscent of ornamental detail found in earlier Buddhist work.

Sārnāth Fragments

196. Seated Buddha, fragment, Sārnāth (eighth century)

The Pāla dynasty of Bihār and Bengal ruled for about four hundred years (c. 760–1142). This last stronghold of Buddhism in India, which practiced a religion that combined Mahāyāna and Hindu elements (Vajrayāna Buddhism),[4] survived until the Muslim invasions in the twelfth century. It was this form of Buddhism that was exported to Nepal and Tibet. This Buddha of the early Pāla dynasty follows the Sārnāth tradition of simple dignity, but it also seems to have an earthy quality not often associated with the earlier Sārnāth work. The Buddha holds a bowl of jewels (his symbols) and is seated in the pose of meditation. On his head is a small figure of the Dhyāni Buddha, Amitābha. (43 5/16 inches high; Archaeological Museum, Sārnāth)

197. Bodhisattva Padmapani, fragment, Nālandā (ninth century)

During the Pāla dynasty the great Buddhist center at Nālandā, including its university and library, was totally destroyed by the conquering Muslims. Approximately a century separates the preceding Buddha from this Bodhisattva, a century that seems to have set the style that Pāla iconography was to take. Although this figure is a Bodhisattva rather than a Buddha, he might well be compared to the earlier Sārnāth Buddha. Both figures have the same slender, graceful proportions, but the later one is a more stylized presentation that does not have the spiritual quality of the earlier work. As his name indicates, this Bodhisattva is the lotus-bearer, and his right hand is in the gift-bestowing gesture. (55 5/16 inches high; National Museum, New Delhi)

198. Dancing Śiva, fragment, Ujjain (ninth/tenth century)

This Śiva figure from Ujjain has none of the sleek stylization of contemporary Pāla art. He holds a trident, drum, and serpent. His vehicle, Nandi the bull, and the drummer look up at him from the lower left, and between his legs is one of his *ganas* (a demigod who attends Śiva). This is a handsome

presentation of the dancing Śiva—each part is balanced so that the total figure becomes fluid, rhythmical motion. (43 1/16 inches high; Central Archaeological Museum, Gwalior)

Bhubaneśvar

199. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, Bhubaneśvar (late sixth or early seventh century)

Existing monuments in Bhubaneśvar span a period of more than fifteen hundred years. Because of its location on the east coast, Orissa was spared much of the destruction by early Muslim invaders who leveled most of the great religious centers in other parts of northern India. There are hundreds of existing temples and ruins—all with variations in structural design, ornament, and antiquity—plus quantities of sculptural fragments that combine to form one of the most important architectural sites in India.

The method used in constructing these buildings was common throughout India. The stone courses were not bonded with mortar, but gained strength through mass supporting mass and stability by weight pressing downward. In constructing a high tower, craftsmen weighted the entire structure at the top with a massive disk-shaped stone (āmalaka) to counteract any shifting to the side. Earth ramps were built to put the huge stones in place.[5] It is believed that in some cases the interior of the building was filled with earth or sand, which was removed through doorways when the building was completed. The quantity of ornamental carving found on the temples of Bhubaneśvar is overwhelming, and the quality of much of it is superb. A design device used with great versatility on the early shrines is the horseshoe arch (gavāksa) design. On later temples a popular motif is the forest nymph or yakshī, a marvelous Hindu interpretation of the ancient tree spirit. Some of the later temples also include extremely erotic sculpture. Tantrism, a particular cult or phase of Hinduism that stressed physical union of male and female elements in its ritual, was popular at this time in Orissa and in other parts of India. The zenith of its plastic expression was probably reached at Konārak.

The wealth of material in the Bhubaneśvar area seems endless. One wonders if all the sites have ever been counted, let alone studied. There is a difference of opinion on the dates and chronology of some of the shrines. I have used K. C. Panigrahi's *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneśvar* as an authority for these temples. The research of Dr. Panigrahi, curator of the Orissan State Museum at Bhubaneśvar, has led him to believe that the Paraśurāmeśvara Temple probably was built in the first half of the seventh century.[6]

The early Orissan temple form is made up of two basic elements: a horizontal assembly area (called *jagamohan* in Orissa) and a vertical tower above the shrine room. These two elements are joined together to form one building. The assembly area has a double roof with windows between the two roofs that act as a clerestory to admit light.

200–201. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, carving motif detail

A motif that appears on many of the early Bhubaneśvar temples is the chaitya-arch or gavāksa design. Plate 200 shows a stone-grille window (in checkerboard design) with the arch ornament to the left of it, and plate 201, taken from the right of the door, introduces another motif common in Orissan and other north Indian architecture—a lionlike figure or face sometimes called the Face of Glory *(Kīrtti-mukha)*. As is the case here, this device is often fitted into a gavāksa design. Note the very low-relief carving on this temple.

202–3. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, doorway details

Plate 202 shows a close-up view of the doorway. In the bottom panels on either side of the door jamb are guardians of the shrine, and above them are amorous couples. In the center of the lintel is a figure of Ganesh, the upper portion of which unfortunately is in deep shadow. Plate 203 is a larger detail of the figures to the left of the entrance.

204. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, tower detail

Although the tower is basically a vertical structure, the horizontal elements are important in the total design. The horizontal recessed bands, the projecting vertical units, and the carved ornamentation all work together to produce a richly textured structure.

205–6. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, niche details

These two niches in the lower part of the tower point up the extensive use of the chaitya-arch design, the stylized lotus, and the lion mask. The chaitya-arch is used to frame both the lion mask and lotus forms, as well as deities. Two handsome forest nymphs appear at the top of plate 206. The nymph on the left takes one back several hundred years to what must be one of her ancient ancestors—the Sāñchī forest nymph. The beading motif helps unify the design.

207. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, window grille

This pierced grille has two groups of figures: dancers and musicians. Both have wonderful rhythm and movement—the artist seems to have caught their actions at a given moment and simply suspended them in time.

208. Vaitāl Deul, Bhubaneśvar (late eighth century)

The tower structure of the Vaitāl Deul is similar to a Buddhist chaitya-hall, and there are many design details that suggest that the craftsmen who worked on this shrine may have been trained in the Buddhist tradition by the Bhauma School.[7]

Set into the four corners of the porch section or assembly area are miniature towers, making this a very early example of a five-shrined temple. Framed in the projecting chaitya-arch is a ten-armed Śiva Natarāja, and in the rectangular niche below him is Sūrya, the sun god, holding a lotus in each hand. The small figure seated in front of Sūrya is Aruna, who holds the reins of the seven horses that are pulling the sun god's chariot. The carving is more delicately worked than that on the Paraśurāmeśvara Temple.

209. Vaitāl Deul, gable-end view

The presiding deity of this shrine is Chāmuṇḍā (the most terrible aspect of the goddess Durgā), and the reader will note that there are many female figures included in the ornamentation.

210. Vaitāl Deul, gable-end detail

This detail shows the beautiful design and craftsmanship of various individual units within the total façade. Each small section is a complete composition in itself as well as forming a unified part of the whole. The central figure in the large niche is Durgā with two attendants. In the rectangular niche above her are Hara (Śiva) and Pārvatī seated side by side, and in the medallion formed by the chaitya-arch is Lakulīśa (twenty-eighth incarnation of Śiva) and his four disciples.

211–12. Vaitāl Deul, details of plate 209

The profusion of ornament covering the Bhubaneśvar temples becomes apparent at close range. From a distance it is simply texture. Although many of the figures in the niches remain unidentified, one can distinguish cult deities from secular figures since the deities usually have haloes or other identifying objects. The deity in plate 212 holds what appears to be a lily in her right hand and the left hand is in the *katyabalambita* pose (posture of ease).

213. Torana, Bhubaneśvar (date unknown)

This torana, which is next to the Vaitāl Deul but does not seem to be related to it, is much less massive than the one at Mukteśvara Temple. The two do, however, have some design similarities: the makara creatures at the two ends of the arch, the small, recessed chaitya-arches in which faces appear, the bead-and-tassel ornament on the pillars, and other small decorative devices.

214–15. Mukteśvara Temple, two views, Bhubaneśvar (ninth/tenth century)

The Mukteśvara Temple has been variously described as the most beautiful Indian temple, the jewel of Indian architecture, and a dream realized in stone.[8] Some might consider it a combination of all three, but certainly any observer must agree that it is indeed a jewel. It is a more mature temple concept than any of the earlier Orissan architecture: its elements include a torana, a small porch in addition to the *jagamohan*, a low-walled enclosure to separate it from the surrounding terrain, and an ablution tank at its rear. All of these elements work together to produce a temple complex of great beauty.

216. Mukteśvara Temple, torana

This back view of the torana was taken just inside the low surrounding wall. The heavy massive gate repeats the same organic growth quality as that of the temple. The flat lotus-design of this unusual capital suggests two great lily pads flowing out of the pillars to support the huge arch. The sixteen-sided pillar starts from a square base, each side of which includes the façade of a miniature temple. The front and back of the arch are similar in design.

217. Mukteśvara Temple, entrance detail

The doorway to the Mukteśvara Temple is much more ornate than those of earlier Orissan temples. Seen from a distance the ornament simply becomes texture, but a close view reveals the delicacy of the craftsman's work. It is difficult to realize that stone can be cut with such intricacy.

218. Mukteśvara Temple, general view of śikhara

The verticality of the Mukteśvara tower form is further emphasized by the projecting bands of ornament that rise from the base to the top. The strongest horizontal line is introduced at the point where the tower starts to curve. The gavāksa design literally covers the entire tower. On the low wall, miniature niches topped with a gavāksa design also form the main decorative element.

219. Mukteśvara Temple, detail of śikhara

220–21. Mukteśvara Temple, details

The detail shown in plate 220 is about fourteen to fifteen inches high. The Indian craftsman often worked into his ornament little devices that amused him—and also his public. In the square frame is a puzzle: two heads, but how many bodies? Above in the medallion is a young happy face.

A female figure holding onto the bough of a tree (pl. 221) is a motif that goes back at least as far as Bhārhut and Sāñchī. Here the problem of working on a narrow projecting panel has been resolved with a figure that is both relaxed and rhythmical. In the recessed section is a wonderfully grotesque animal and rider. The bulging eyes, stylized mane, and general head design mark him as a relative of some of the lionlike creatures found in other Asiatic countries.

222. Rājarāni Temple, Bhubaneśvar (eleventh or twelfth century)

The dates given by Panigrahi place the Rājarāni Temple about one hundred years earlier than the date given by some authorities.[9] The śikhara of this temple is different in design from the earlier ones. Miniature śikharas on the body of the main tower project to form a series of self-repeating designs. Like the Khajurāho towers (see comment for pl. 234), they suggest a growing organism built up by cellular repetitions, but in this case the miniature towers stand out sharply from the main body of the structure.

223. Rājarāni Temple, detail of plate 222

224–28. Rājarāni Temple, tower details

The extensive use of small patterning (pl. 224) acts as a textured background for the sculptured figures. The delicate, refined carving contrasts with the smooth, rounded forms of the figures.

An apsara holding a bough arched over her head (pl. 225) is a much-used motif on Rājarāni Temple. The rhythm and relaxed movement suggested by these figures make a charming presentation of the female figure. The richness of the decorative carving plus the dark shadows produced by the horizontal and vertical projections are important elements in the total composition. Plate 225 is an enlargement of one of the figures in plate 224. Plate 226 is a lower tower detail.

Plate 227's close-up view of the angular sections between the turretlike projections indicates the size of the stone courses—all of which were laid up without mortar. Again it is apparent how the dark shadows produced by projecting units combine with a brilliant sun to achieve strong dark and light patterning—an important device in the overall appearance of the building.

Beneath the large niche on the left side of plate 226 is the façade of a miniature shrine. Plate 228 is a detail taken from that area. Entwined about the engaged columns are two pairs of nāgas and nāginīs. The figures in the small square niche are probably Śiva and Pārvatī. The gavāksa design, though small, occupies a central position in the various levels of this miniature shrine.

229–231. Lingarāja Temple, general views, Bhubaneśvar (c. 1100)

The Lingarāja Temple is the largest in Bhubaneśvar (about 180 feet high) and is considered by some the greatest architectural achievement of Hindu India. It does indeed dominate the landscape for miles around. The śikhara, which suggests a huge organic growth form, rises abruptly from the ground. The tower form itself is relatively simple, suggesting a great beehive with strong vertical accents. Within the huge (520 feet by 465 feet) compound are many smaller shrines that were built over a four- or five-hundred year span (c. eighth–thirteenth centuries) and all of which are dwarfed in both size and grandeur when compared with the Lingarāja. Unfortunately no non-Hindu is permitted inside the temple compound (at least not when I was there), but those interested may look into the grounds from a raised platform outside the walls that has been provided for this purpose.

Khajurāho

232. Lakshmana (right) and Matangeśvara temples from the northeast, Khajurāho (c. 1000)

Situated in Khajurāho, a small village of central India, is a group of magnificent temples built by the Chandella kings. These temples might be considered the high point of the Indo-Aryan style of architecture. Although today approximately thirty-five remain, experts think that there were once eighty-five and that they must have been the center of a religious and educational complex. These temples did not result from gradual development but came about from a sudden burst in building activity caused by royal patronage, religious devotion, and artistic genius—all present at one time. The high point of this temple-building activity came between 950–1050. The Khajurāho temples are not colossal, but they achieve their upward-soaring effect through a skillful handling of proportions—mass related to mass—and the subtle curves that lead the eye upward and inward. Their basic plan is simple, generally that of a cross or double cross with its longer side from east to west and the entrance on the east. Instead of being enclosed within a cloistered wall, each temple stands majestically apart on a high platform. The building itself consists of a high basement story, above this the different areas of the temple, and above these the ascending series of towers—with the śikhara above the shrine room the dominant feature. The verticality of the temple design has been beautifully balanced by horizontal bands of friezes completely encircling the structure. These bands of figures, molded in high relief, present a swirling panorama of gods, demigods, and celestial beings. As the beholder walks around the temple, these figures look down on him or her in a never-ending procession of dancing and singing apsarases, amorous couples, and majestic deities. These are happy, bountiful figures, full of energy and the joy of living. To the Western observer, who thinks of great religious architecture in terms of Gothic cathedrals and their quiet, somber saints, these rollicking figures seem to look down with a mixture of audacity and impudence. This seems strange when one considers the emphasis placed on asceticism in the Indian religions.

The craftsmen of Khajurāho, like those of Sāñchī, mirrored their own time, depicting in stone various aspects of life as well as symbolizing the basic philosophies of their religion. The temple is a symbol of the world mountain, which separates heaven and earth. The vertical emphasis of the structure leads the worshiper upward toward a union with the divine. Some scholars have written that this ecstatic union of the human soul with the divine being is symbolized by many of the figures in the Khajurāho friezes.

Lakshmana Temple, a Vishnu dedication, is one of the largest (98 feet long by 45 feet wide) as well as one of the handsomest in the Khajurāho group. It is typical of the architectural style more or less common to this group of shrines: the units that make up the structure and their ornament seem to be parts of a growing organism that is built up by cellular repetition. Located at the four corners of Lakshmana's platform are subordinate sanctuaries (three are visible in this plate), and, as is true with all the larger temples, Lakshmana has a floor plan of a two-armed cross. The reader will note that the roof sections over the temple units rise progressively (as a series of mountain peaks) to culminate in the great tower above the shrine room, which dominates the total structure. When this plate was shot, the temple on the left, Matangeśvara, was being used for worship, a fact indicated by the flag flying from its tower.

233–34. Lakshmana Temple, tower details

The towers of the Khajurāho temples reveal the skill with which a simple geometric motif was used to produce not only surface enrichment but also a unified form with an interesting play of light and shadow. Once again it is the chaitya-arch or gavāksa motif that is the basis of the repeated design (pl. 233).

The organic quality of Indian architecture is clearly evident in the detail of plate 234. The tower design, made up of a series of self-repetitions, resembles a huge growing organism. Small shrines containing deities and celestial beings are arranged between the miniature towers in interrupted horizontal bands.

235. Lakshmana Temple, balcony detail

The large temples at Khajurāho have five balconies, two on each side and one at the rear. The deep recessing between the horizontal bands produces strong dark and light contrasts that help balance the vertical upsweep of the building.

236. Lakshmana Temple, detail

The carved ornament on Indian temples is often shown and discussed as pure sculpture, unrelated to the architecture of which it is a part. This plate, showing a section of the two sculptured bands of figures that encircle the lower part of the temple, indicates how the sculpture takes its place as an integral part of the architectural design. The figures that appear between two projecting balconies are related to the large horizontal bands on the balconies, as well as to the smaller horizontal units. The craftsmen of Khajurāho have provided a unified architectural form that presents a profusion of ornament but still reads as architecture.

237–38. Lakshmana Temple, platform details

The vertical face of the platform on which Lakshmana stands is encircled by narrow bands of figures. They depict processions, hunting, and fighting scenes. Plate 237 shows a small section of a boar-hunting scene and plate 238 depicts part of an elephant procession.

239. Lakshmana Temple, lion

A Khajurāho theme that appears several times is that of a beast resembling a lion. Sometimes the creature seems to be attacking a woman, sometimes he seems to be protecting her. Beyond this handsomely designed animal figure can be seen part of the elephant frieze of the Lakshmana platform.

240. Viśhvanātha Temple, Khajurāho (1002–3)

Viśhvanātha, like Lakshmana, is one of the larger temples at Khajurāho. There is an inscription on the wall that records that King Dhanga erected the temple, a Śiva dedication, in 1002–3.[10] This front view of the building emphasizes the symmetrical layout of the design, but the series of ascending towers tend to blend together into a single unit.

241. Viśhvanātha Temple, view of bands and tower

Viśhvanātha has three bands of sculpture that encircle the building, rather than two as in Lakshmana. This plate shows both a section of the three bands between two projecting balconies and a view of the ascending series of towers.

242. Viśhvanātha Temple, tower detail

The observer walking around the Khajurāho temples is constantly amazed by the ever-changing patterns. This plate, which shows in detail some of the surface enrichment, is only a small segment of the tower form, but one is aware of the variety obtained by using the same motif.

243. Viśhvanātha Temple, end view of balcony

Incised line designs are used not only on the balconies but also on the towers, in the architectural members that frame the bands of figures, and inside the temple. This foreshortened view of the pillar shows the design of the capital with its four Atlastype figures. The strong dark and light patterning adds dramatic interest to the composition.

244. Viśhvanātha Temple, frieze detail

The representation of couples in various erotic poses is a common theme in the Khajurāho friezes. The theme has been explained in various ways; one interpretation is that the carvings symbolize union with the divine. From early Vedic times the Hindu faith has held that the universe is the result of the cosmic union

of male and female elements. The ultimate aim of humanity is to achieve a union or oneness with the Universal Being, and to this end the total temple structure was dedicated.

245. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, entrance, Khajurāho (c. 1000)

The Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple is slightly larger than any of the other Khajurāho temples (102 feet long by 67 feet wide and 102 feet high) and is usually cited as the finest example of Khajurāho architecture. There is little doubt that its entrance area is the most handsome of the temples. These entrances were designed to impress the devotees as they ascended the steps and prepared to enter the temple.

246–47. Entrance details

The ornamental detail (shown in pl. 246) taken from the lower left of plate 245 shows the tactile quality of the stone and also the character of the symmetrical design that has been combined throughout the temple with the high relief carving of the figures. The chiseled quality of the ornament and the deep incised lines produces strong angular forms and brilliant dark-light patterns.

Shown in plate 247 in detail is some of the incised line design—circles, scrolls, geometric shapes, lion masks, and other symmetrical devices—that has been used all over the Khajurāho temples to produce a pleasing composition.

248. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, horizontal figure bands

This plate could be compared with a similar view (pl. 236) of Lakshmana Temple, which has two bands of figures rather than three, but in both cases the horizontal bands are designed to tie in with the balcony unit.

249. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, detail of horizontal figure bands

Light and shadow are emphasized as the sun strikes projecting areas while other areas remain in deep shadow. The vertical and horizontal lines of the architectural elements supply an angularity and strength that is necessary to support the fluid rhythm of the figures.

250–51. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, details of figures

These two details show figures of gods and celestial beings. Many of the gods have been damaged and their identifying characteristics are gone, but there is no doubt that the bearded figure in plate 250 is Agni, the god of fire. In old Vedic hymns Agni is said to dwell in the two pieces of wood that produce fire when rubbed together—a living being springing from dead wood. The god of fire dwells in every family home. Because of this he is a witness to all actions and serves as mediator between other gods and human beings. Agni is still worshiped today and his blessing is sought on such solemn occasions as marriage and death.

252. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, detail

As already mentioned, the union of male and female is a recurring theme at Khajurāho. This pose, suggesting a yoga exercise, is undoubtedly performed as some kind of ritual, evident from the calm acceptance indicated on the faces of the attendants.

253. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, interior detail

This interior pillar design repeats the vine or scroll motif found throughout the temple. The massiveness of the pillar is lessened by the recessed corners and the incised surface patterning.

254–55. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, platform details

The horizontal bands of carving in these two plates are from the vertical face of the platform on which the temple rests. The actual length of the sections shown here is about twenty inches. Although the detail is small, it is carefully organized and the rhythmical band under the figures is particularly pleasing.

256. Chitragupta Temple, Khajurāho (early eleventh century)

Chitragupta Temple is dedicated to the sun god, Sūrya. It has only two balconies, giving it the form of a single cross. The ascending scale of the roof design is not as dramatic as that of the larger temples. The

horizontal bands of exterior carving include hunting scenes, processions, fighting elephants, dancing girls, gods, and demigods.

257. Chitragupta Temple, detail

Nandīśvara, a form of Nandi, is often portrayed with a human body and the head of a bull. In this form he is an attendant or companion to Śiva and is honored for his bravery and teaching of music.

258. Chitragupta Temple, garbha griha

Deep within the temple is the shrine room (garbha griha) containing the image of Sūrya, the god to whom the temple is dedicated. He is shown wearing high boots and is driving a chariot drawn by seven horses, each horse representing one day of the week. Sūrya is also shown in the projecting miniature shrines above the doorway. The exterior of the shrine room is richly ornamented with figures and other decorative devices.

259. Chitragupta Temple, detail of plate 258

260. Pārshvanātha Temple, Khajurāho (first half of eleventh century)

Pārshvanātha, the largest (c. sixty-eight feet long by thirty-five feet wide) of the Jain temples at Khajurāho, is similar in character and design to the Hindu temples. Included in the Jain religion are most of the gods of the Hindu pantheon, many of whom appear on the exterior walls of this shrine. The observer standing close to the base of the structure sees the tower as a great upward-swelling form that curves inward.

261. Pārshvanātha Temple, garbha griha

This entrance to the shrine room has a similar design to that in plate 258. Inside the garbha griha is a small seated figure of Pārshvanātha, the twenty-second Jina, which was installed in 1860 and gives the temple its present name. There is some evidence that the original image may have been Adinatha, the first Jina.[11]

262. Pārshvanātha Temple, detail

The Indian sculptors have never attempted to reproduce an anatomical likeness of the human figure, but have always tried to present a figure alive with the inner spiritual qualities of humanity. To convey this idea they have used a form that seems to start from within and push outward.[12] In this plate the elegant position of the apsara's hand as she removes a thorn from her foot and the rather amused expression on her face suggest a human being enjoying the role of celestial being.

263. Pārshvanātha Temple, Rāma and Sitā detail

These two figures suggest that the sculptor was attempting to reveal the supreme love and unity that is possible with the gods. These divine beings certainly suggest tenderness and complete understanding—an emotional quality not often seen in Indian sculpture. The attitude of the figures, the tilt of Rāma's head in relation to the sweeping curve of both figures, the position of the opposing arms all reinforce the sculptor's aim in portraying the supreme oneness of Rāma and Sitā.

264–65. Fragment details, Khajurāho (950–1050)

Plate 264 is a close-up of a necklace detail that is typical of the kind found on figures at Khajurāho and also shows the tactile quality of the stone. Plate 265 is part of a small horizontal band that indicates the craftsman's care and sensitivity, even with minute detail.

Gwalior Fort (Sās-Bahu Temples)

266–67. Sās-Bahu Temples, Gwalior Fort (1093)

The two Sās-Bahu temples, one large and one small, are dedicated to Vishnu. Literally translated, *Sās-Bahu* means "mother-in-law and daughter-in-law." The two temples are similar in style and have many characteristics in common with the temples of Khajurāho. The buildings today are only parts of a temple

structure—the entrance porch and the maṇḍapa. At the rear of the Great Sās-Bahu Temple (pl. 266) is a brick base and core that may have formed the foundation of the now-destroyed śikhara. The present building is in the form of a cross 100 feet by 60 feet and its exterior is divided into three stories of open balconies separated by massive piers. Little Sās-Bahu Temple (pl. 267) is smaller and simpler in construction, and there is no indication that it ever had a tower. It is a one-storied building on a high base that very much resembles the porch of a Khajurāho temple.

268. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, porch detail

Although the Sās-Bahu temples are richly ornamented, there is relatively little figure carving on them, and what there is has been badly damaged. The strong dark and light contrasts on a single plane are the result of mildew on the buff-colored sandstone. The incised design is similar to that at Khajurāho.

269–70. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, details

These plates show some of the massive post-and-beam construction that is typical of Indian architecture. The recessed and projecting planes and the incised patterning help minimize the heavy proportions of the structural units.

271. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, interior detail

The pillars on the left form an interesting contrast to the massive pier on the right. Because of its three stories of open balconies, the Great Sās-Bahu Temple admits more light than is usual in an Indian shrine. Here we see bright light from the outside as well as dark recesses within.

272. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, pillar detail

The massive pillar on the right side of plate 271 uses different motifs to produce an interesting composition. The checkerboard design at the lower right of this plate is used often in Sās-Bahu and is also found in the Man Mandir Palace, a magnificent residence built in Gwalior Fort by Man Singh in 1486.

273. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, interior pillar detail

This pillar, unlike the one in the previous plate, is ornamented with a single motif. To avoid monotony the designer has reversed and inverted the motif and has also introduced strong vertical and horizontal lines.

274. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, ceiling detail

The ceiling, as was usual in Indian temples, was constructed by corbelling. The square opening formed by the side walls was usually reduced to an octagon by placing stone slabs across the corners. This in turn supported a circular ceiling.

Mount Ābu

275–77. Exterior views of Dilwara shrines, Mount Ābu (c. 1150, date of extensive repair)

The temples of Mount Ābu in south Rājasthān are undoubtedly the most famous Jain sanctuaries in India. The marble from which they are constructed, brought up the mountain from a quarry about thirty miles away, was carved with extremely intricate and amazing detail. This fragile, ornate work was produced by scraping and rubbing the stone rather than by using a chisel. It is said that the workers were paid by the amount of marble dust they removed.[13] There are five temples in the Dilwara group, but the two oldest (Vimila Vasahī and Lūna Vasahī) are generally considered the finest. The earlier of these two shrines, built by Vimila Shāh, was consecrated in 1031 and dedicated to Rshabhanātha, one of the early Jain deities. However, the Dilwara shrines were more than once severely damaged by Muslim invasions and inscriptions show that the Vimila Vasahī underwent at least two extensive repairs, the earliest occurring in 1150. There is some question whether the temple as it exists today was completely built in 1031, or whether the maṇḍapa was added at the time of the first major repair in 1150. The date for Lūna Vasahī is 1232–48 but because both temples have had extensive repairs there is a mixing of styles that makes the work of the two shrines quite similar.[14]

Plate 275 shows part of the roof design of Vimila Vasahī. The exterior of the Dilwara shrines is relatively

plain, which plate 277 makes evident. It is easy to understand why an unsuspecting observer is totally unprepared for the extravagant carving on the interior.

278. Vimila Vasahī Temple, interior detail

The basic design of Vimila Vasahī and Lūna Vasahī is essentially the same. Both are free-standing temples contained within a courtyard (approximately 128 feet by 75 feet), enclosed by a two-columned arcade that gives access to a series of cells, each containing an image of one of the Jinas. This plate shows a cell at one end of the arcade. The pillars that form the double colonnade are relatively plain and smaller than those in the assembly hall.

279. Vimila Vasahī Temple, ceiling detail

The general assembly hall *(rangamaṇḍapa)* of both the Vimila Vasahī and Lūna Vasahī have large domes of amazing craftsmanship. This detail shows four of the sixteen *vidyādevīs* (goddesses of knowledge) that radiate out from the center. The dome is composed of eleven concentric bands, five of which contain figures or animals. The purely decorative bands terminate in a great central pendant of such delicacy that it seems to float at the top of the dome.

280–83. Vimila Vasahī Temple, interior details

Each of the columns that supports the corbeled dome of the general assembly area has a four-branched bracket capital; on top of this is another dwarf-bracketed column, on which rest the great beams that support the dome. The figures in these four panels are on the dwarf pillars under the brackets and are typical representations of the dancing girls and musicians found on pillars throughout the shrine.

284. Vimila Vasahī Temple, pillars

This pair of pillars indicates the exuberant ornament that is typical of the Dilwara temples. The marble has been polished to such an extent that definition of precise form is almost lost. The deep carving, the translucent marble, and the brilliant sunlight produce dramatic contrasts.

285. Vimila Vasahī Temple, detail of plate 284

286–87. Vimila Vasahī Temple, pillar details

The extreme high polish of the marble, in addition to its inherent translucency, create the impression that there is a source of light within the stone producing a soft, luminous glow. The deeply cut relief carving produces strong darks, out of which the light marble emerges, becoming almost dazzling in bright sunlight. This quality, which is characteristic of the stone carving at Dilwara, is clearly shown in these two plates, particularly plate 287.

288. Lūna Vasahī Temple, colonnade detail, Dilwara, Mount Ābu (1232–48)

The Lūna Vasahī, built by two brothers, Tejapāla and Vestupāla, is dedicated to Meminatha, the twenty-second Jina, and was built about one hundred years after the Vimila Vasahī. The Lūna Vasahī has a ground plan similar to that of Vimila Vasahī, with one exception. The enclosing wall behind the main shrine does not include a range of cells but rather a perforated marble screen, behind which is the portrait gallery *(hastishālā)*. This plate shows the end of the colonnade on the north side and the beginning of the screen that encloses the east end of the courtyard. It is a handsome screen made up of variously designed squares.

289. Lūna Vasahī Temple, cell detail

This cell, typical of those forming the enclosing walls on the sides of the courtyard, contains one of the Jain saints, Shri Supārshvanatha. The figure seems mechanical and lacking in any spiritual quality. This seems generally to be true of the Jina images at Dilwara, although the musicians and dancing-girl figures are rhythmical, fluid, and comparable to other contemporary North Indian figurative ornament.

290. Lūna Vasahī Temple, shrine detail

The shrine in the center of the open courtyard is elaborately carved. This view shows a section of the

pillared vestibule *(nava-chokī)* in front of a closed pavilion that leads to the inner sanctum. On either side of the heavy wooden door are two elaborately carved niches *(gokha)*, each containing a saint.

291. Lūna Vasahī Temple, figure detail

This small figure detail, one of a series from the base of the half-wall shown in plate 290, is about seven inches tall. Each figure, in a toranalike arch, is located at the base of each outer pillar in the vestibule wall. It is incredible that the fragile, ribbonlike marble has remained undamaged through the centuries.

292. Lūna Vasahī Temple, shrine detail

The shrine door of plate 290 is centered in this plate. The space below the steps, the general assembly area, is covered by a magnificent dome supported by eight elaborately carved pillars. Intricately carved serpentine arches stretch from pillar to pillar.

293. Lūna Vasahī Temple, ceiling detail

The most amazing aspect of the Dilwara temples is their large intricately carved domes. This partial view of the Lūna Vasahī dome gives some indication of their design. Like that in Vimila Vasahī, it is based on a series of ornamented bands that form concentric circles and culminate in a large, delicately designed pendant that hangs in the air above the rangamaṇḍapa.

294–95. Lūna Vasahī Temple, pillar details

The tall pillars that support the dome of the assembly area are composed of a dwarf pillar resting on another pillar. The capitals of both pillars shown here are of the four-branched bracket type. On the capitals of the dwarf pillars rest the massive beams that carry the weight of the dome and roof structure. The pillars are ornate and varied in design.

Tañjavūr

296. Rājarājeśvara Temple, Tañjavūr (1009/1010)

The great period in South Indian structural architecture reached its climax under the Chola kings, who in the eleventh century won domination over all of the south and Ceylon and finally over parts of North India and Burma. The Chola kings, famous as builders, constructed projects on a heroic scale. They built huge artificial lakes as part of their enormous irrigation projects. Their cities were elaborately laid out with the temple as the focal point. The high point of the Chola rule came with Rājarāja the Great (985–1018). Like all the Chola kings he was a devotee of Śiva, and, to show his devotion and to commemorate his own conquests, he built the great Rājarājeśvara Temple at Tañjavūr. This too was a monumental work (180 feet long and 190 feet high). Its pyramidal tower was topped with a spherical stone twenty feet in diameter weighing eighty tons. The stone was installed by being hauled up a dirt ramp several miles long. It is clear that the construction of such a temple was a colossal undertaking, but more important is the fact that the complete structure was a magnificent shrine. It is situated within a high wall that is surrounded by a moat. Seen from a distance, its great tower dominates the landscape.

297. Rājarājeśvara Temple, gate

The size of the gate is indicated by the figure within the arch and by the car at the left. The barrel-vaulted roof looks back to Bhīma ratha at Māmallapuram, but also looks ahead to the great towering gopurams that are yet to come.

298–99. Rājarājeśvara Temple, gate details

In the walls of the gate are niches framed by pilasters that repeat the order used in the main shrine. In these niches are Hindu deities. There are two gigantic figures, both centered on each side of the arch and both facing toward the opening—almost mirror images of each other. Benjamin Rowland identifies the figure in plate 298 as Śiva Natarāja.[15] Similar figures on either side of the doors in the temple have been identified by others as guardians of the shrine or dvārpālas. Śiva sometimes is a dvārpāla, but would he appear in a Natarāja pose?

300. Rājarājeśvara Temple, general view

The design of the Rājarājeśvara Temple is relatively simple: rectangular base, pyramidal tower, and spherical dome. In front of the vimāna is a large assembly hall, a pillared portico, and a detached Nandi pavilion, all centrally balanced with the main shrine. The vertical wall of the vimāna is about fifty feet high and is divided into two stories consisting of a series of deep niches framed by pilasters. Within each niche is a deity. The style of the tower is typically Dravidian, but the horizontal divisions between the thirteen stories are less pronounced than those in earlier temples. By minimizing these horizontal units, the designers have permitted an uninterrupted upward sweep of the tower. The Great Temple of Tañjavūr would dwarf any of the earlier temples, but it does seem to be a far-removed descendant of the Dharmarāja ratha of Māmallapuram.

301–2. Rājarājeśvara Temple, wall details

These two plates show typical wall details from the shrine: deep niches formed by pilasters, deities in the niches, and the gavāksa device repeated throughout. In plate 301 the figure in the left niche is the Bhikṣāṭana-mūrti of Śiva. The youthful god stands naked and carries a begging bowl in his left hand. To his right, just beyond the pillar, is Pārvatī offering food to her lord. Giant dvārpalās guard the doors of the temple. Note the restraint with which ornament was used. Sherman Lee observes that by the tenth century the interest of sculptors in South India had passed from stone carving to metal work.[16] If this is so, there was a later revival of stone carving that ultimately produced a decadent architecture fairly writhing with sculpture.

303–5. Rājarājeśvara Temple, side wall details

Plate 303 is an enlargement of plate 302. The figures on either side of the column are celestial beings who appear to be flying to worship Śiva.

The figures in plates 304–5 are different aspects of Śiva, the King of Dancers. In plate 304 he is shown as Śiva Natarāja performing the cosmic dance of creation. This pose, most famous in the bronze sculptures of South India, is perhaps more suited to metal but is marvelously executed here in high-relief stone carving. This cosmic dance suggests boundless energy and yet effortless movement. The aspect of Śiva as destroyer has been interpreted in various ways, and there exists an iconography based on specific acts of destruction or punishment. Plate 305 shows the Kālārimūrti of Śiva, an episode in which Yama (god of death) is punished for attempting to take the life of a young sage, Mārkandeya. The actual act is not shown here (as it sometimes is), but Yama is shown to the left of Śiva, running after the young sage, who is clinging to a lingam (Śiva's symbol) on the right. Śiva seems to be in a trance or state of ecstasy after punishing Yama and saving the life of Mārkandeya.

306–8. Rājarājeśvara Temple, stairway details

The stairway designs include low but massive sidewalls with huge curved capstones. The detail from the south side of the building (pl. 306) is interesting for two reasons: first, it shows Buddhist iconography in the relief sculpture; second, it shows a small section of the script on two bands that encircle the shrine. It is intriguing to find on a Hindu temple dedicated to Śiva a stone relief showing the Enlightenment of the Buddha. The fact that it is in an inconspicuous place only adds to the interest. The script tells of the victorious campaigns of Rājarāja the Great.

In plate 307 the massive capstone flows from the mouth of a fantastic animal that has been carefully designed for its given space. Plate 308 shows a detail from the bottom of the steps. The elephant's trunk fits in naturally with the curving design of the coping.

Konārak

309. Sun Temple, Konārak (1238–64)

The Sūrya Deul (Sun Temple), built later than the high period of the northern style, is the last great Orissan structure. It is situated in an isolated area near the sea, and today all that remains of it is the assembly hall. The tower, now in ruins, may never have been completed because of the construction problems such a high tower (over 200 feet) would have involved. The temple, dedicated to Sūrya, the sun god, was conceived as a great architectural chariot with twelve huge wheels carved into the side of its base and monumental stone horses to pull the great vehicle.

310. Sun Temple, horse detail

According to Hindu tradition, the sun god is drawn across the skies in his winged chariot by seven horses. Sūrya's seven horses once stood on the side of the long steps leading up to the temple. This plate shows the best-preserved of these powerful animals, straining to pull the great chariot.

311. Sun Temple, east doorway

The assembly hall that this doorway leads to is approximately 100 feet square and 100 feet high. The great door on the east must be fifteen feet high. Its approximate size may be estimated from plate 309, where a group of men are standing in front of it. Seven bands of patterning surround the opening.

312. Sun Temple, detail of doorway bands

From a distance the ornament around the door appears to be little more than texture, but in a close view the intricacy of the ornamental bands is at once apparent. Although there is much variety in the design of the seven bands, they combine to form a unified whole.

313. Sun Temple, wheel area detail

314. Sun Temple, base detail

This plate shows a section of one of the narrow horizontal bands below the wheels.

315–17. Sun Temple, side details of chariot wheel areas

The richly ornamented wheels on this temple are ten feet in diameter. Their circular shape stands out against the vertical and horizontal lines in the base, but the wheel is related to its background by repeating design motifs from the base, particularly the circular twining vine that frames a wealth of small design details (see pl. 314).

The wheel shown in plate 316 is perhaps the best-preserved of those at Konārak. The richness of the carving, both on the wheel and the base, plus the strong light-and-dark patterning, make a handsome composition. Plate 317 is a detail of plate 316.

318–20. Sun Temple, wall details

The walls of the Sun Temple are almost totally covered with ornament. The subject matter of some of that ornament has brought the temple a great deal of notoriety because of its very explicit erotic sculpture. Such figures, representing mithunas, have been variously interpreted. The phase of Hinduism known as Tantrism emphasized sexual union in its ritual. The Tantric cult seems to have had many followers in this part of India at this time, and it was probably such a cult that undertook the construction of the Surya Deul. In addition to mithunas, the ornament includes mythical animals, half-human and half-serpent creatures, deities, apsarases, and purely decorative motifs.

321–22. Sun Temple, details of Sūrya

Since the shrine at Konārak is dedicated to Sūrya, many representations of this god appear: three of them are quite large and look out from three sides of the shrine. In plate 321 Sūrya is astride a horse. However, he is most often shown standing upright with his charioteers on each side of him and the dawn maidens kneeling in adoration (as in plate 322). At the bottom of the plate (partially cut off) are his seven horses, which are very small in scale. Behind the god's head is an ornate trefoiled chaitya-arch. The stone is finely worked (perhaps overworked) but retains some of the plastic quality of earlier sculpture.

323. Sun Temple, Music and Dance Pavilion

Within the huge walled compound (865 feet by 540 feet) of the Sun Temple are other buildings. Of these the most important that remains is the *naṭa mandir* (dancing hall), which stands about thirty feet in front of the main entrance to the temple. The base and side wall remain, but the roof, which may have been similar to that of the assembly hall, is gone. Plate 323 shows the east side of the naṭa mandir, and beyond it, partially visible, is the façade of the main temple, seen through the center pillars of the dancing pavilion.

324. Sun Temple, Music and Dance Pavilion, entrance detail

Plate 323 shows a frontal view of two rampant mythical animals poised above two elephants. Here is a side view of the animals, as well as a small section of the wall enclosing the stairway.

325. Sun Temple, Music and Dance Pavilion, base detail

The quality of the sculpture on this building is similar to that of the main shrine. The base and pillars are ornamented with hundreds of happy figures—dancing girls, musicians, processions, and fantastic figures. The arrangement of the vertical and horizontal lines and the recessing tends to produce a columnar effect. From a distance the ornament appears to be texture, but actually it contains a wealth of figurative and decorative detail.

326. Sun Temple, Music and Dance Pavilion, pillar detail

The dancers and musicians that ornament this pavilion express a joy and exuberance that seem to shout out their existence.

Somnāthpur

327. Keśava Temple, general view, Somnāthpur (c. 1238)

Keśava Temple at Somnāthpur is one of a group of shrines erected under the Hoyśala dynasty in the Mysore area between 1100 and 1350. These temples are classified in various ways, but since they are neither Indo-Aryan nor Dravidian, they are here classified as regional in style. A characteristic feature of this Hoyśala temple is its star-shaped plan with three shrines. The temple stands on a base, which follows the outside contour of the building and is wide enough to serve as an ambulatory. The horizontal shrine is enclosed within a rectangular, cloistered court. Perhaps the most amazing feature of the Hoyśala temple is the treatment of its wall surfaces, which one might describe as an incrustation of ornament. The stone used in these shrines is a fine-grained chloritic schist, which though relatively soft (for stone) when quarried, becomes hard when exposed to the elements. This inherent quality of the stone undoubtedly partially accounts for the lavish ornament and minute detail. The emphasis of the ornament is horizontal, running in bands completely around the building. The star-shaped plan of the temple has the same basic elements as other Indian temples—shrine room, assembly area, and porch—but it is the disposition of these elements, with three shrine rooms, which alters the basic floor plan as well as the exterior silhouette. Above each cella is a tower, and in the Keśava Temple, a Vishnu dedication, the three towers are equal in size and importance. The starlike contour of the walls is repeated in the towers, though they are separated from the walls by wide, overhanging eaves. The overall effect of Hoyśala architecture reflects to a large degree a local tradition of carving in ivory and sandalwood. The technical skill of these craftsmen indicates that ultimately technique became more important than form. Keśava Temple is about eighty-nine feet from both east to west and north to south and is surrounded by a cloistered courtyard approximately 213 feet by 174 feet. It is one of the best and most complete of the Hoyśala temples. Plate 327 presents a three-quarter view that indicates the star-shaped form of the shrines and the raised ambulatory.

328. Keśava Temple, tower detail

329. Keśava Temple, shrine detail

The amount of surface enrichment is obvious from this plate, however there is no doubt that the total concept succeeds as an architectural unit. The plain wide overhang that protects the vertical walls also separates the roof and wall, here an aesthetic requirement. The effectiveness of the overhang is indicated by the resulting deep shadow. A small section of the court and enclosing cloistered wall are also visible.

330–31. Keśava Temple, sidewall sections

These two plates reveal the versatility of the Hoyśala craftsman, particularly when one considers that the horizontal bands of carving are only six to eight inches wide. The sections above the horizontal friezes are treated as small projecting shrines, each complete with a deity. The alternating projecting and recessed units emphasize the play of light and shadow.

332–34. Keśava Temple, sidewall details

The top horizontal band shown in plate 331, primarily of geese, is enlarged in plate 332 to show its rhythmical composition. The second band is devoted to the Indian crocodile, emblematic of water. Plate 334 is a rhythmical vine motif that also appears in plate 331.

335–38. Keśava Temple, frieze details

Encircling the temple are processional bands, two sections of which are shown here. Plate 335 gives an indication of the carving involved. Some of the figures hold clubs and are riding on wheeled vehicles. In plate 336 small animals pull carts and the figures on the carts seem to suggest movement.

The two small sections of a horse procession (pls. 337–38) are part of a horizontal frieze encircling the temple. Both plates show the care with which the sculptor carved small bits of design, particularly those involving the horses' trappings.

339. Keśava Temple, wall detail

The rectangular porch in front of the three shrines also has horizontal bands of ornament, but their arrangement is different and a band of miniature shrines was added. Between the towers of these miniature shrines are grotesque animals, and above the towers is a band with typical Hoyśala pillars dividing the various figures.

340. Keśava Temple, Vishnu detail

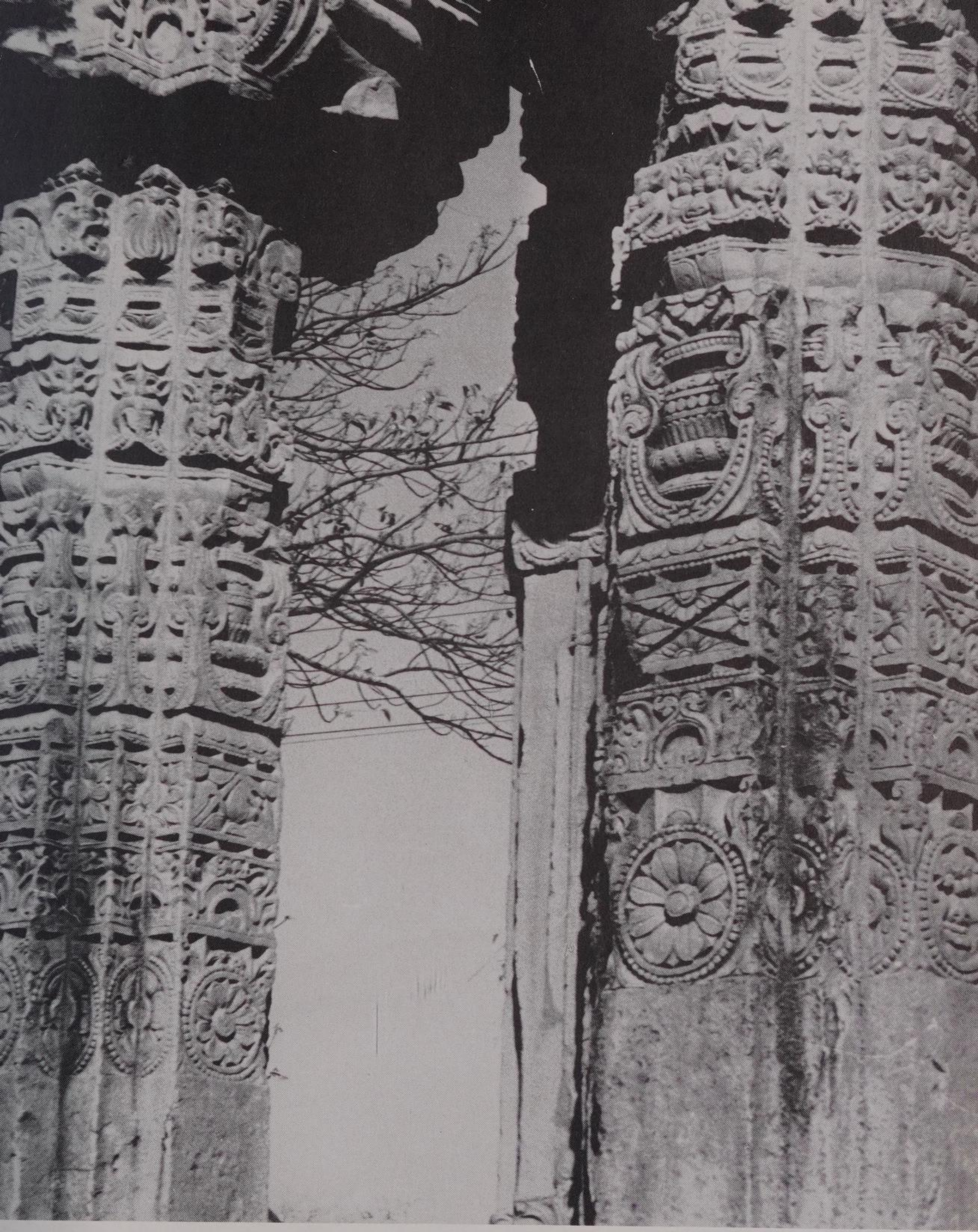
Arranged side by side in separate shrinelike units above the horizontal bands of carving is a continuous panel of deities (see pls. 330–31). Since Keśava is a Vishnu dedication, this god appears repeatedly throughout the temple. Here he is shown with an attendant on either side, each holding a fly-whisk. This plate is typical of the Hoyśala carving technique that has much in common with the carved sandalwood figures that may be purchased in the shops of Mysore today. It is an interesting fact that most of the approximately two hundred larger carved figures on Keśava Temple bear the names of their carvers.

341. Keśava Temple, seated Vishnu

This panel shows a seated Vishnu holding two of his identifying objects: *shank* (conch shell) and *chakra* (circular missile weapon). He is seated in a cross-legged yoga position on a base ornamented with lotus leaves, and has a headdress almost identical to that shown in the previous plate.

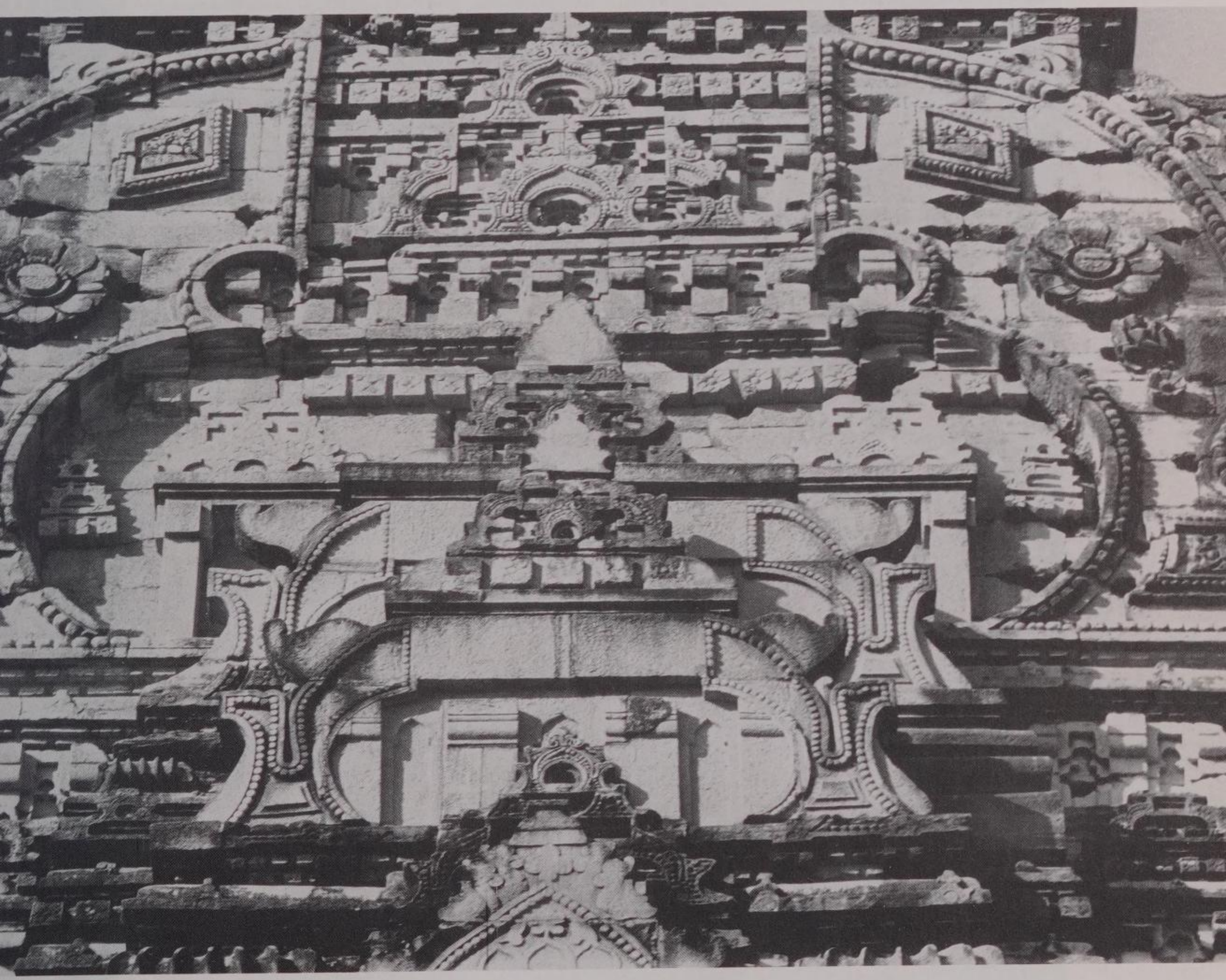
342. Keśava Temple, detail

This female figure, holding a bunch of grapes in her right hand, has an earthy quality and is massively proportioned.



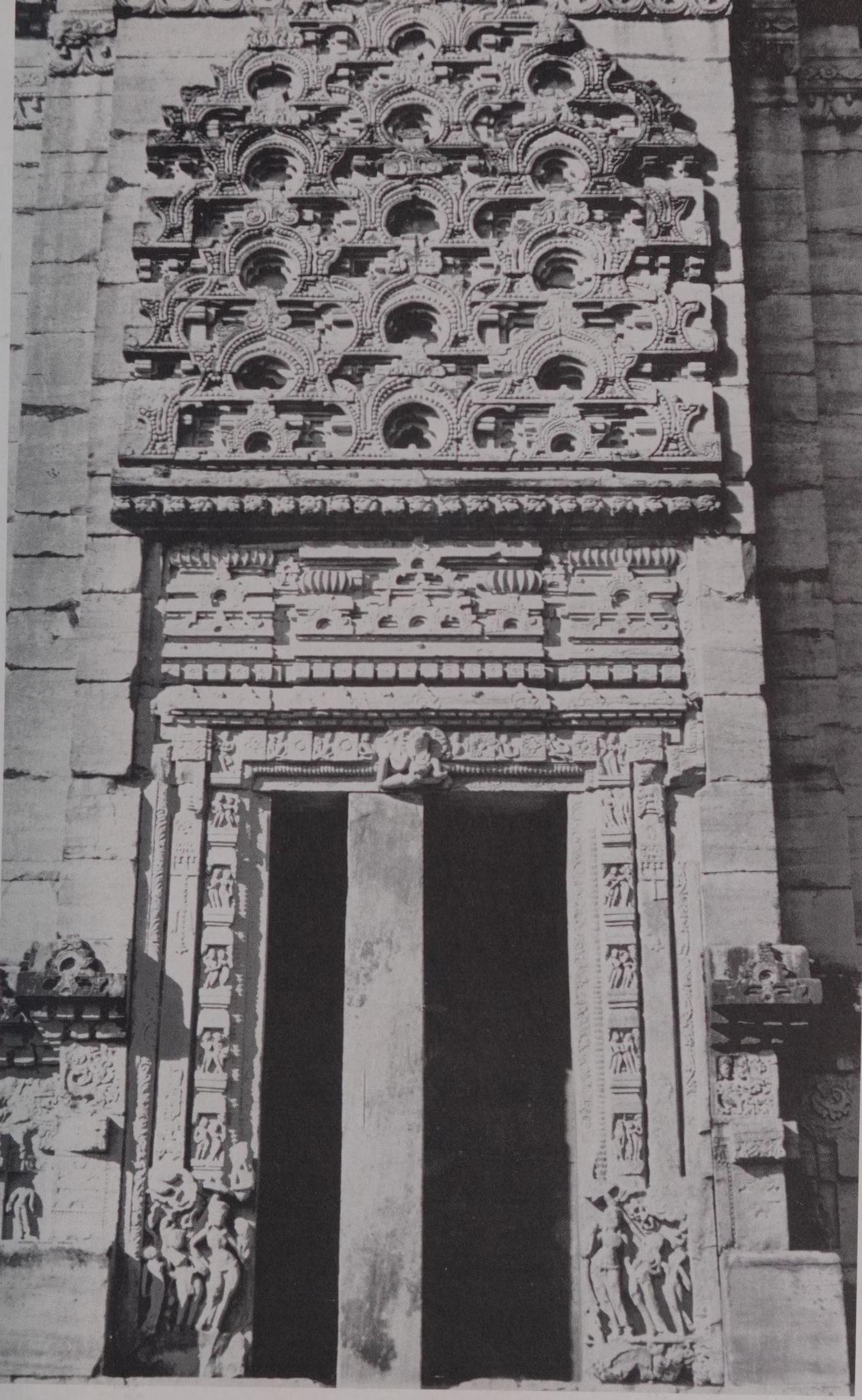
190. Teli-ka-Mandir, entrance gate, Gwalior Fort

191. Teli-ka-Mandir, general view

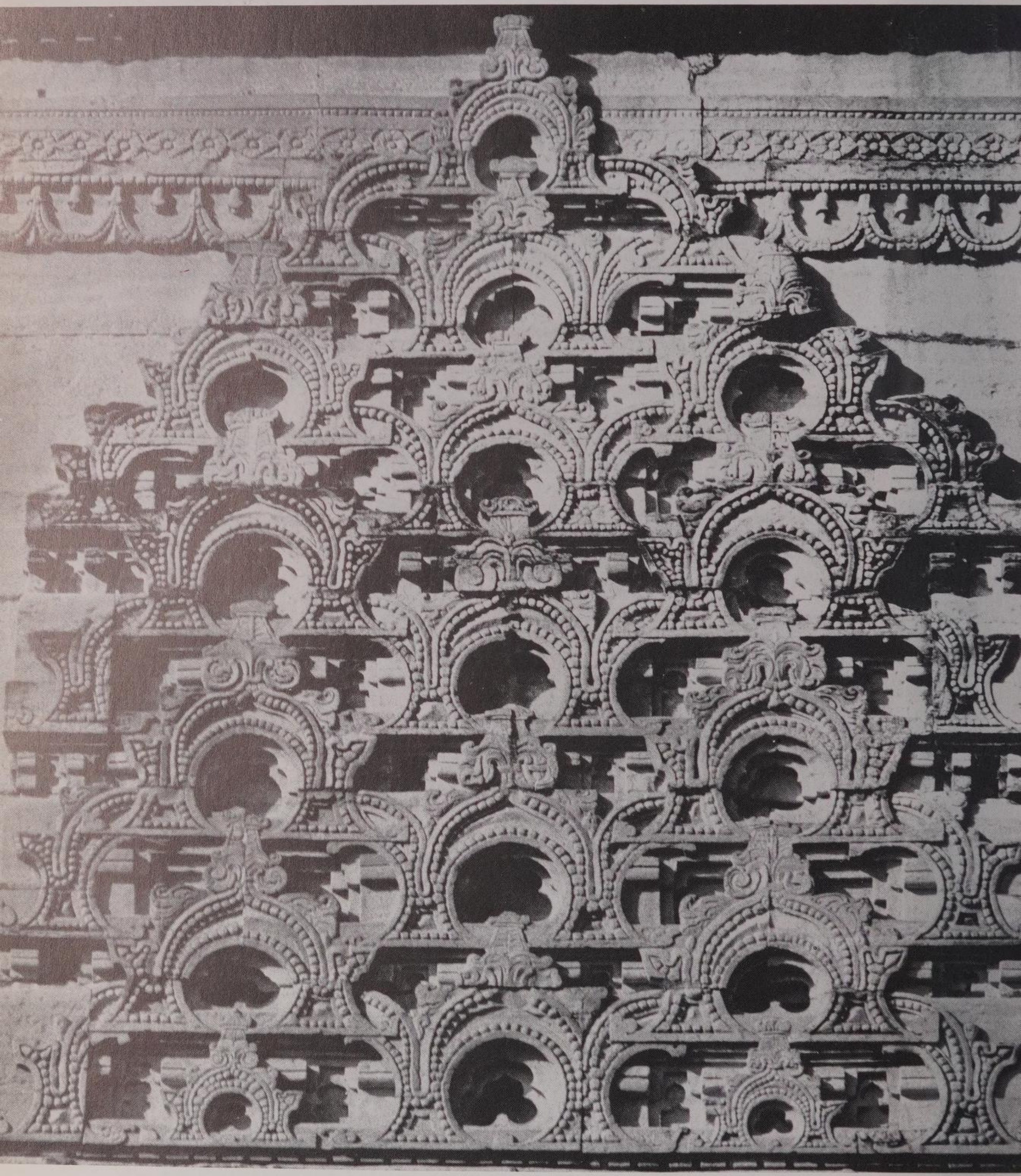


192. Teli-ka-Mandir, façade detail

193. Teli-ka-Mandir, doorway niche detail

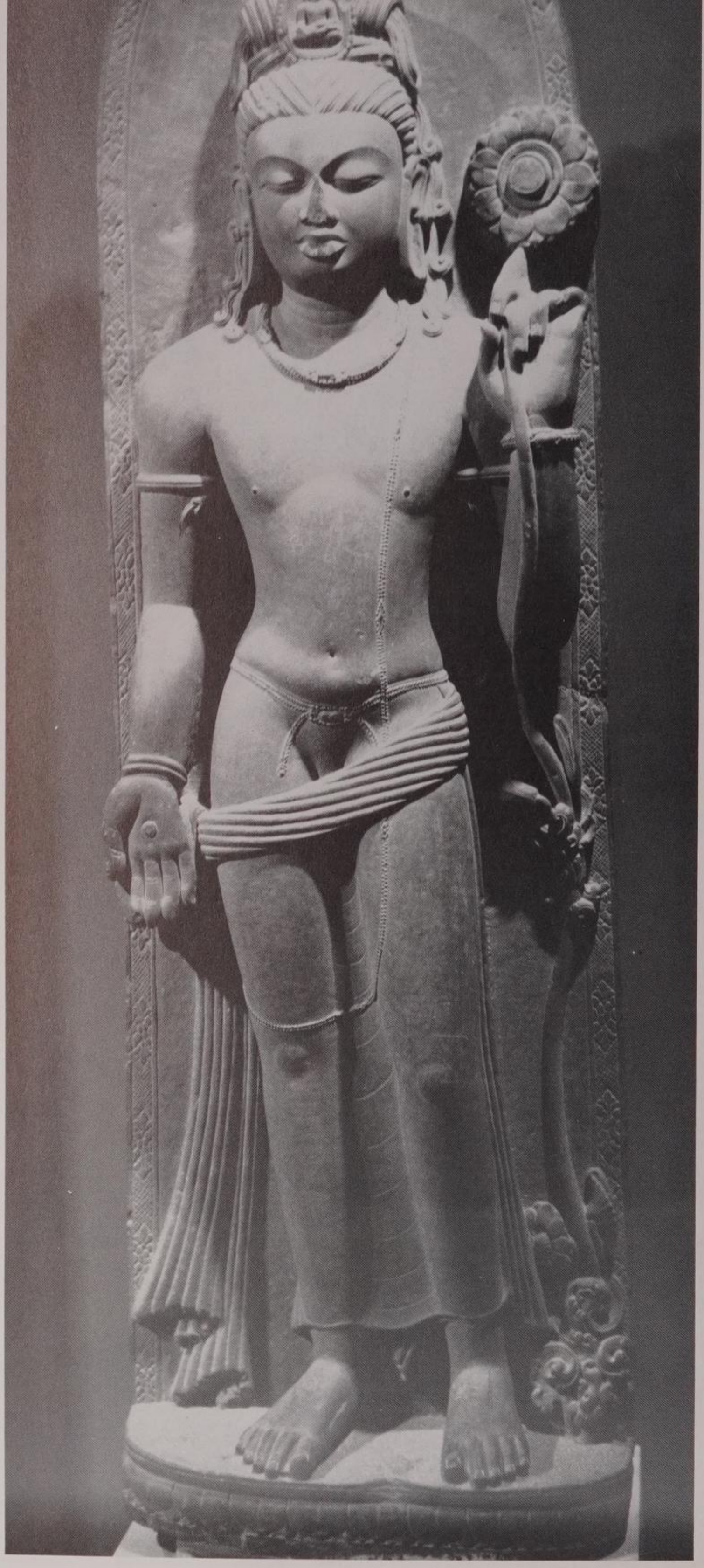


194. Teli-ka-Mandir, doorway detail



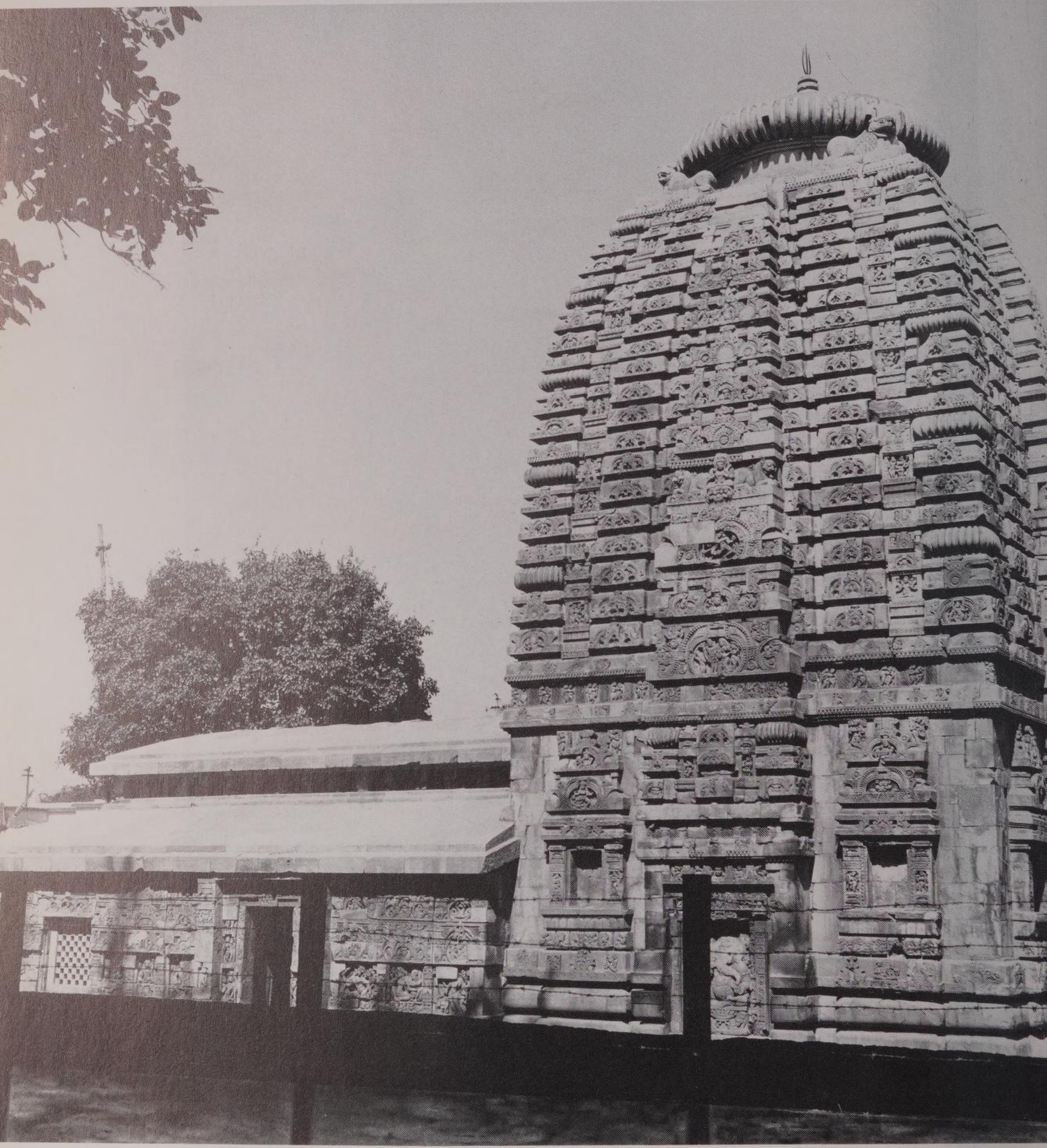
195. Teli-ka-Mandir, detail of plate 194

196. Seated Buddha, fragment, Sārnāth



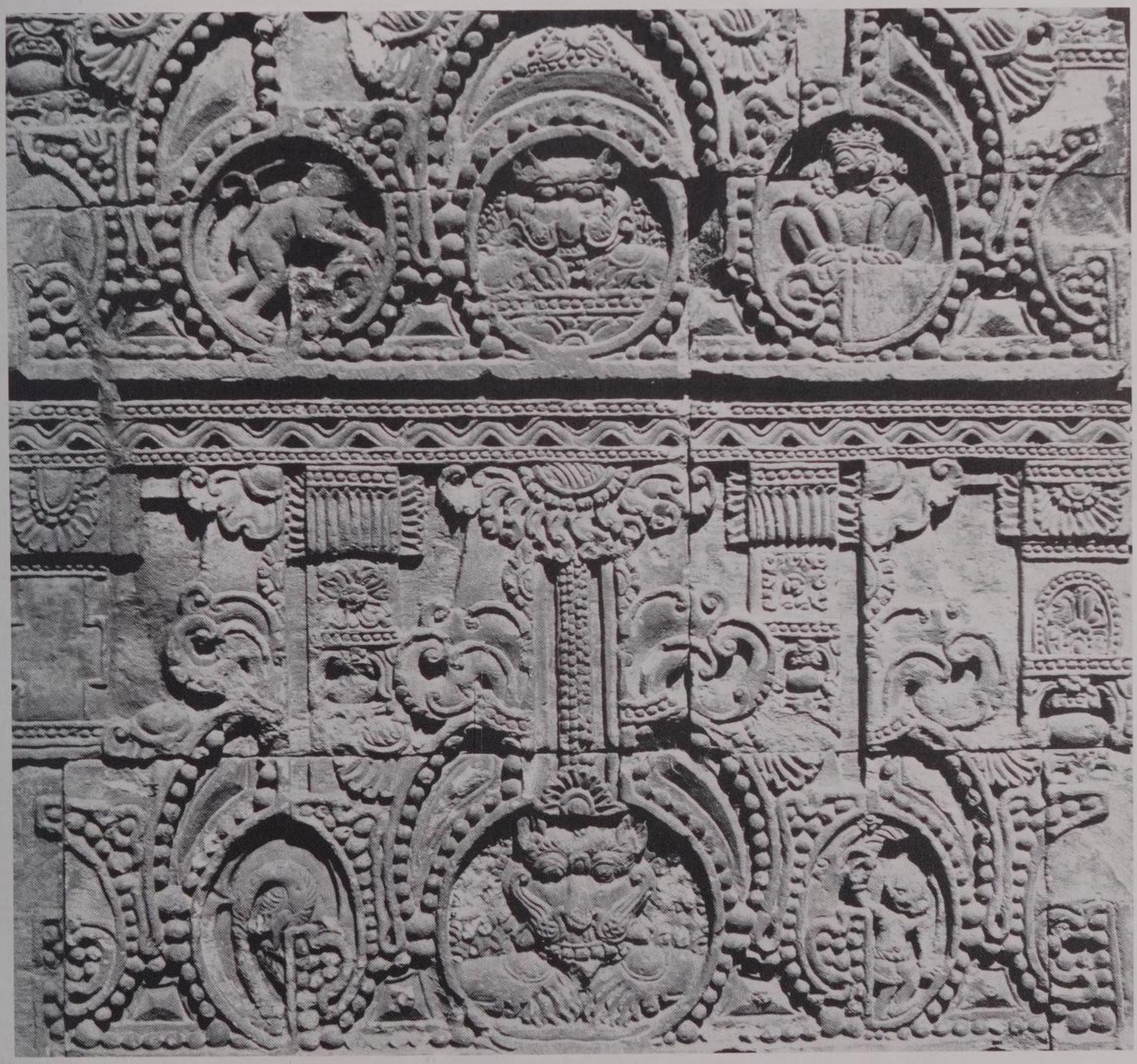
197. Bodhisattva Padmapani, fragment, Nālandā

198. Dancing Śiva, fragment, Ujjain

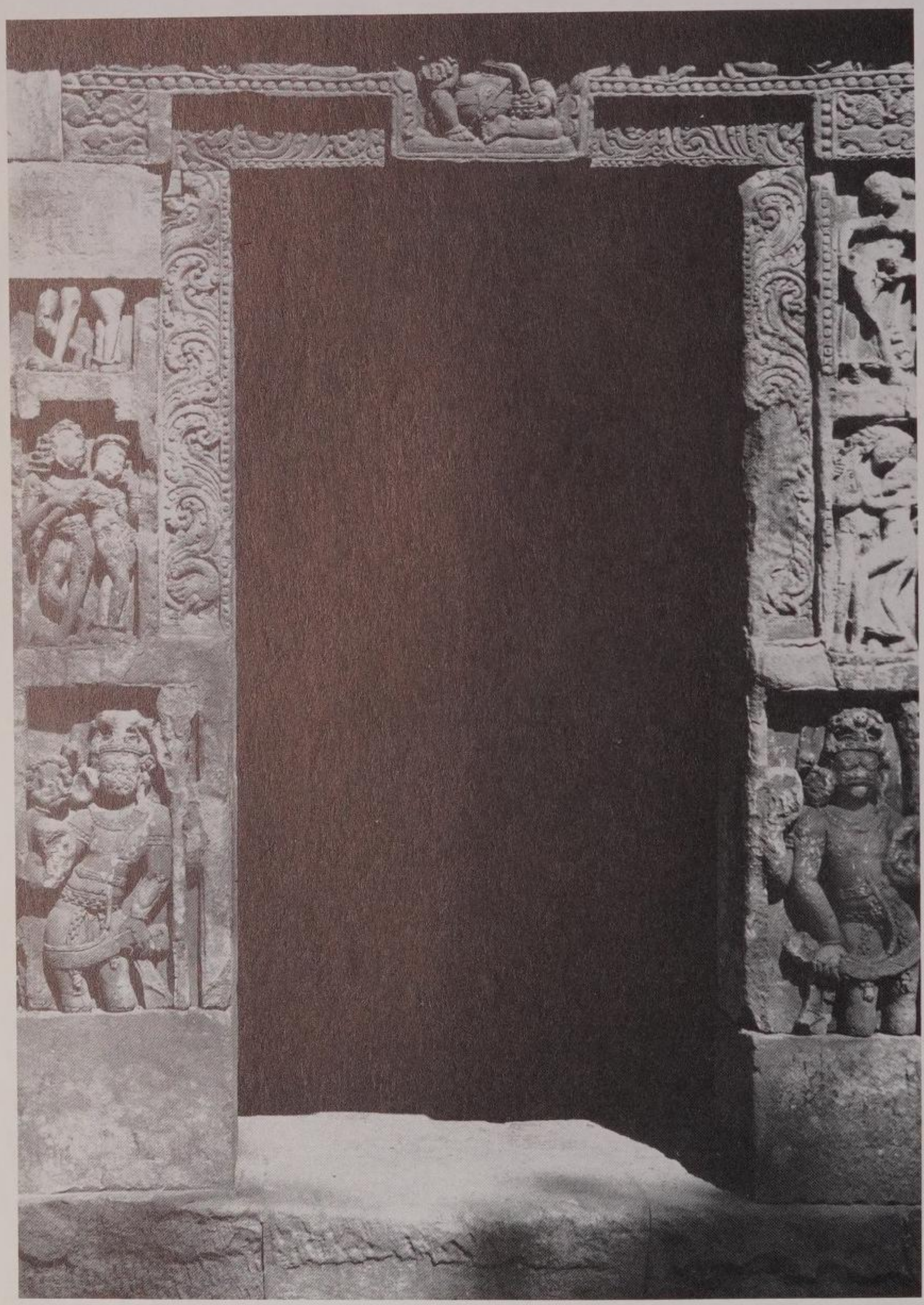


199. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, Bhubaneśvar

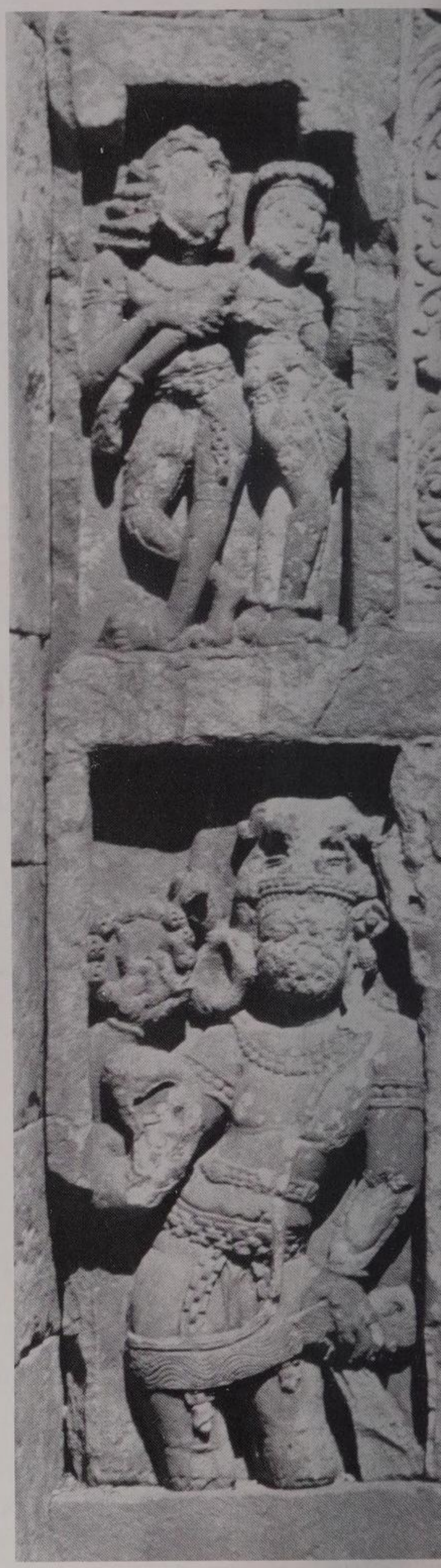
200. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, carving motif detail



201. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, carving motif detail

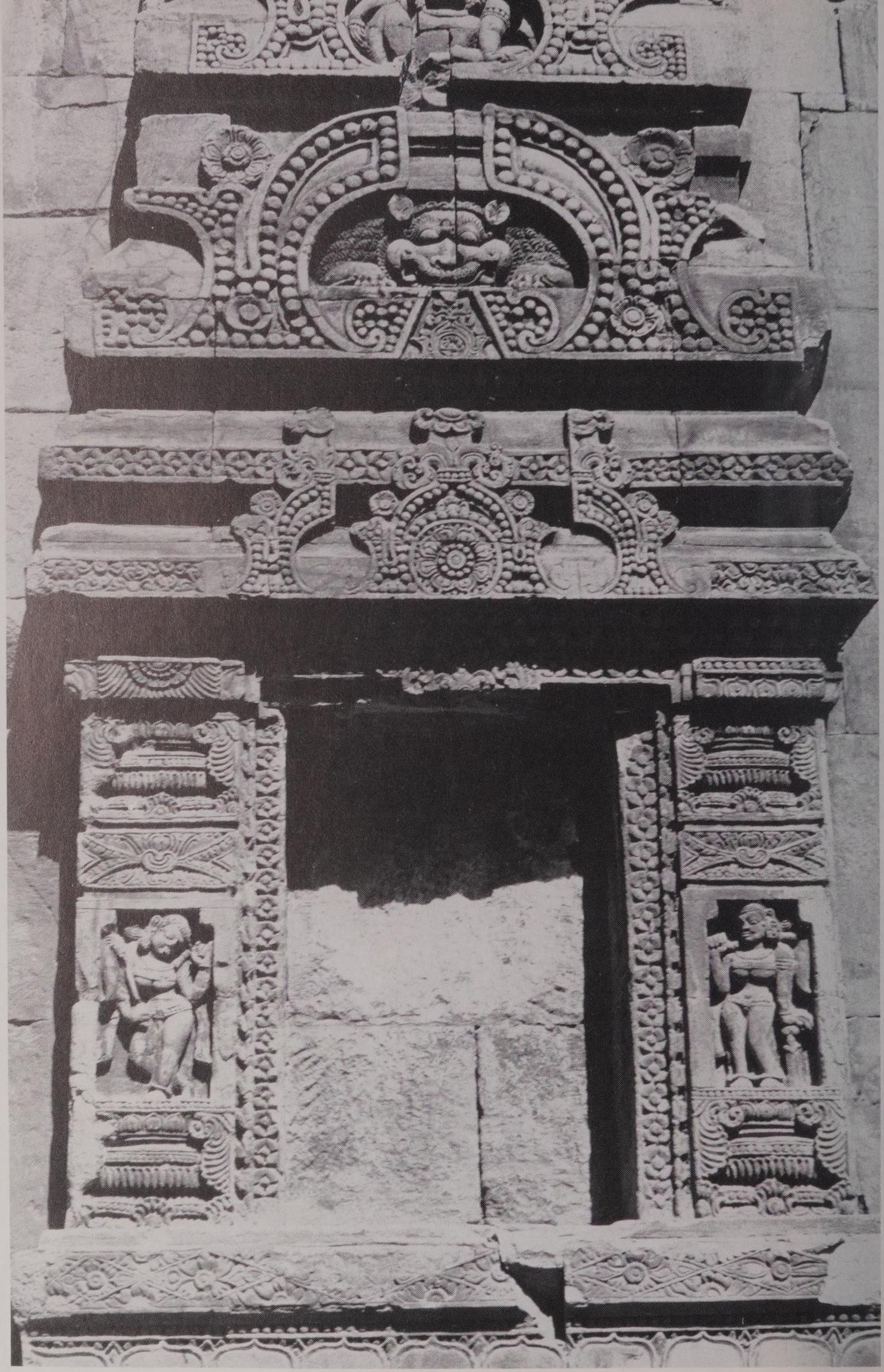


202. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, doorway detail



203. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, doorway detai

204. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, tower detail



205. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, niche detail

206. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, niche detail

207. Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, window grille

208. Vaitāl Deul, Bhubaneśvar

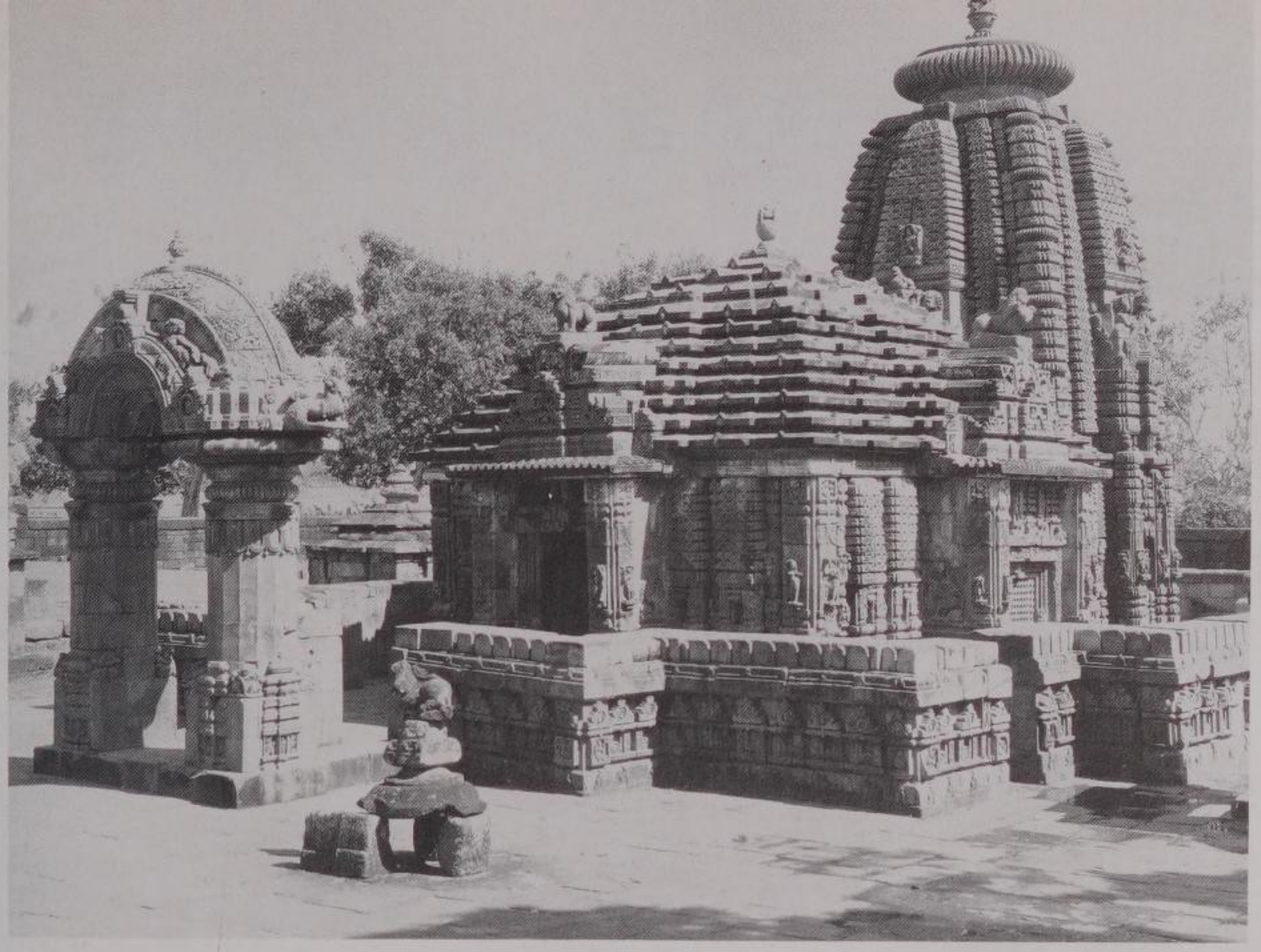
209. Vaitāl Deul, gable-end view

210. Vaitāl Deul, gable-end detail

211. Vaitāl Deul, detail of plate 209

212. Vaitāl Deul, detail of plate 209

213. Torana, Bhubaneśvar



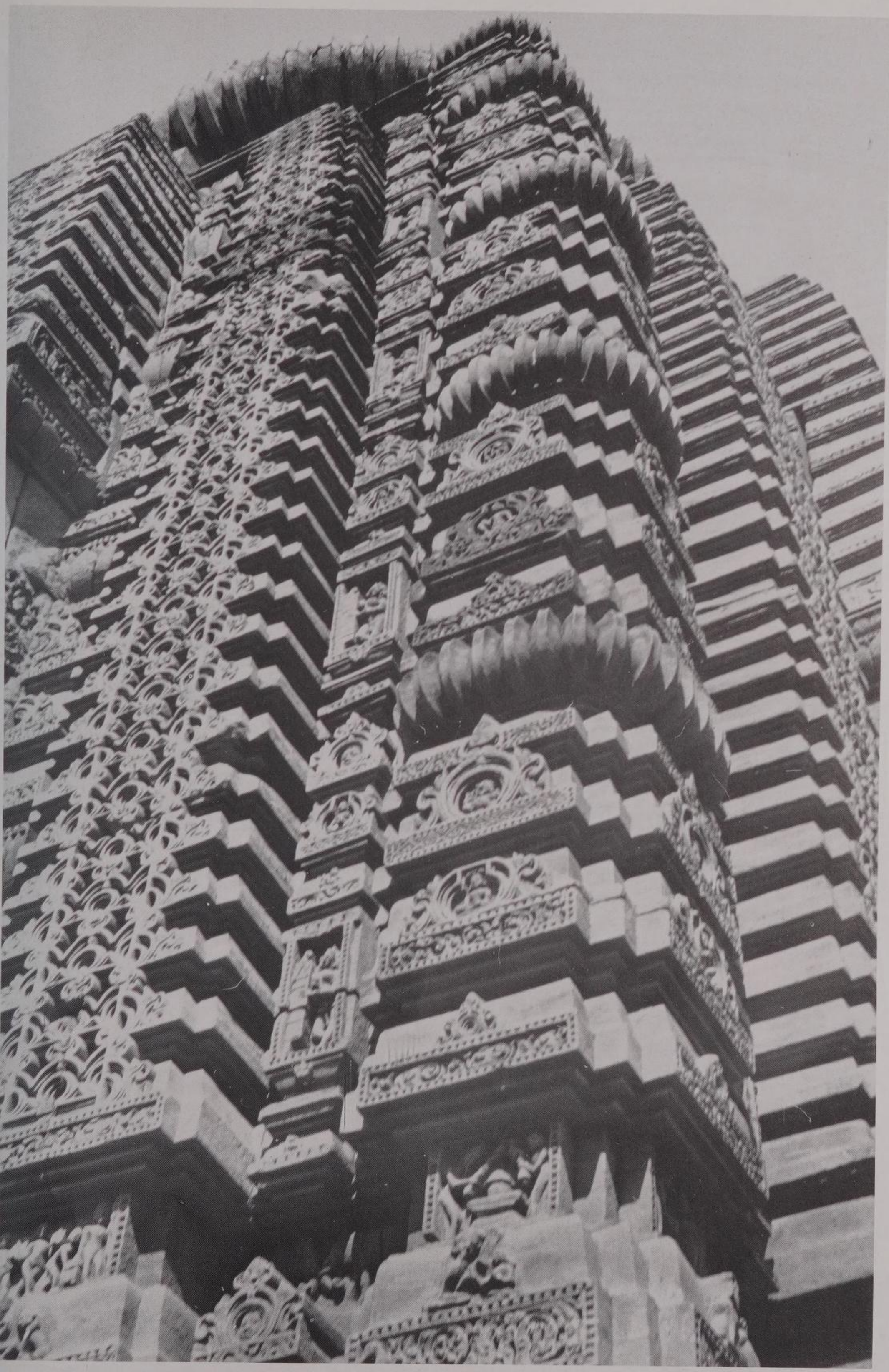
214. Mukteśvara Temple, Bhubaneśvar

215. Mukteśvara Temple, Bhubaneśvar

216. Mukteśvara Temple, torana

217. Mukteśvara Temple, entrance detail

218. Mukteśvara Temple, general view of śikhara

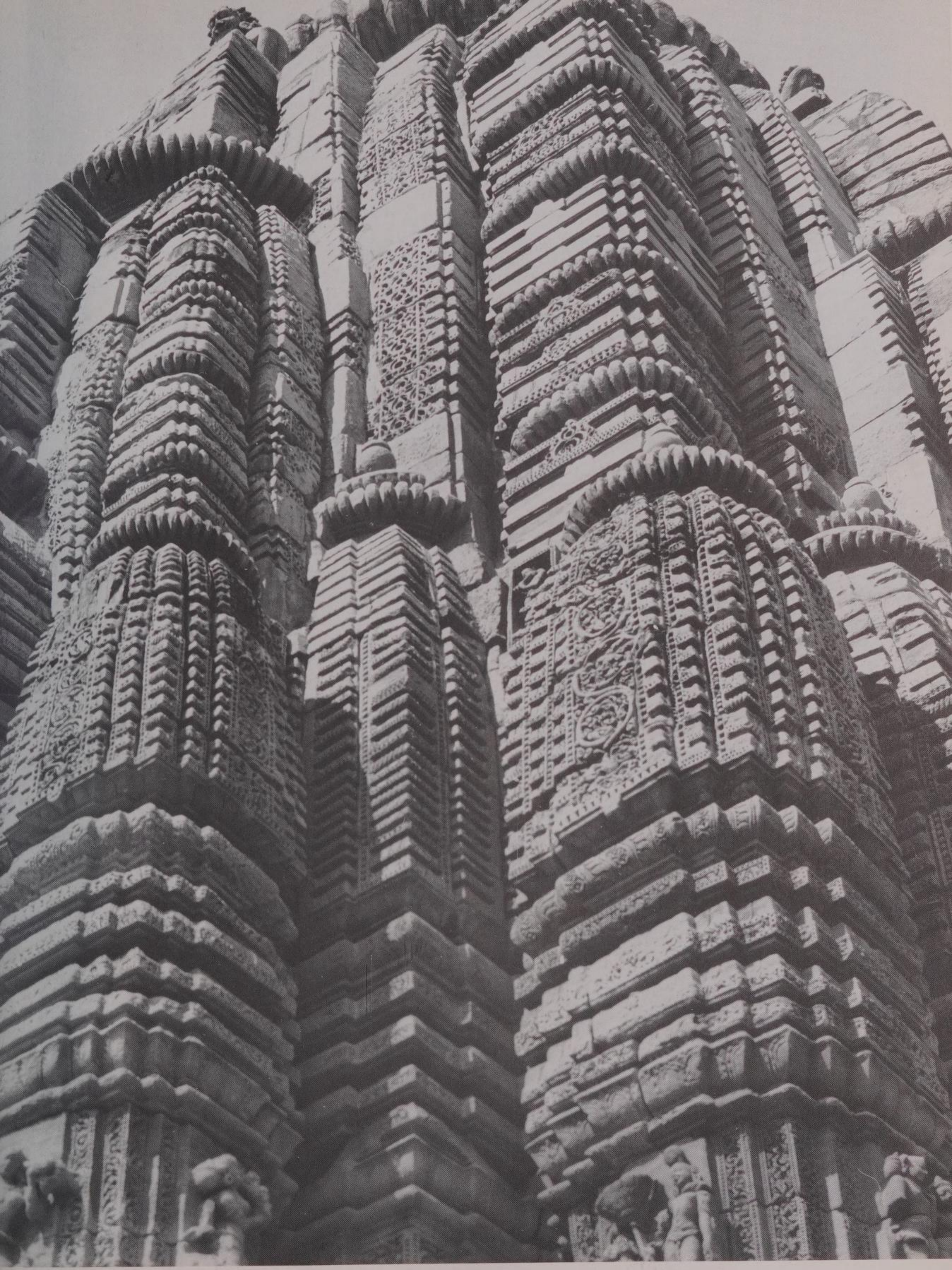


219. Mukteśvara Temple, detail of śikhara

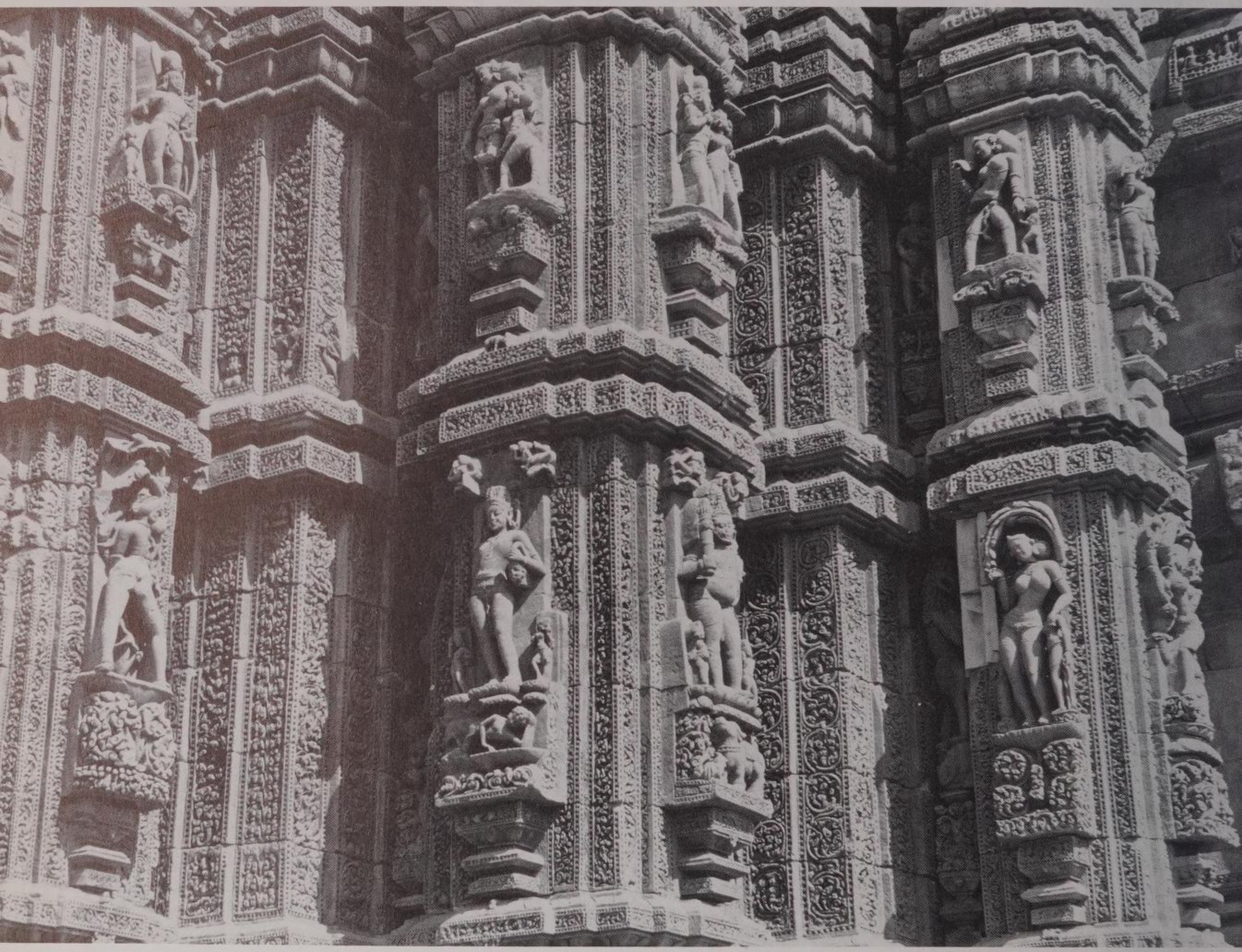
220. Mukteśvara Temple, detail

221. Mukteśvara Temple, detail

222. Rājarāni Temple, Bhubaneśvar



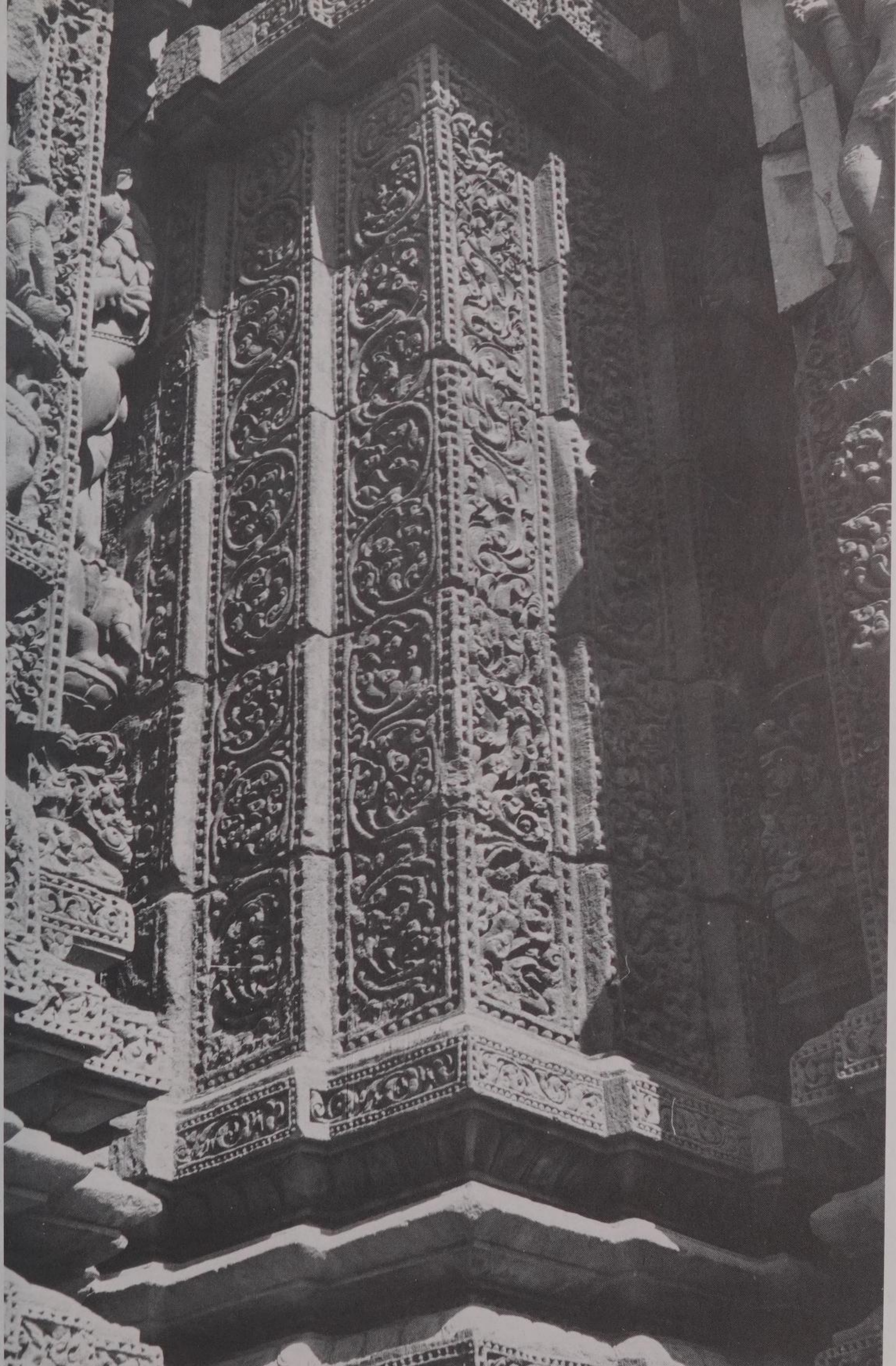
223. Rājarāni Temple, detail of plate 222



224. Rājarāni Temple, tower detail

225. Rājarāni Temple, tower detail

226. Rājarāni Temple, tower detail



227. Rājarāni Temple, tower detail

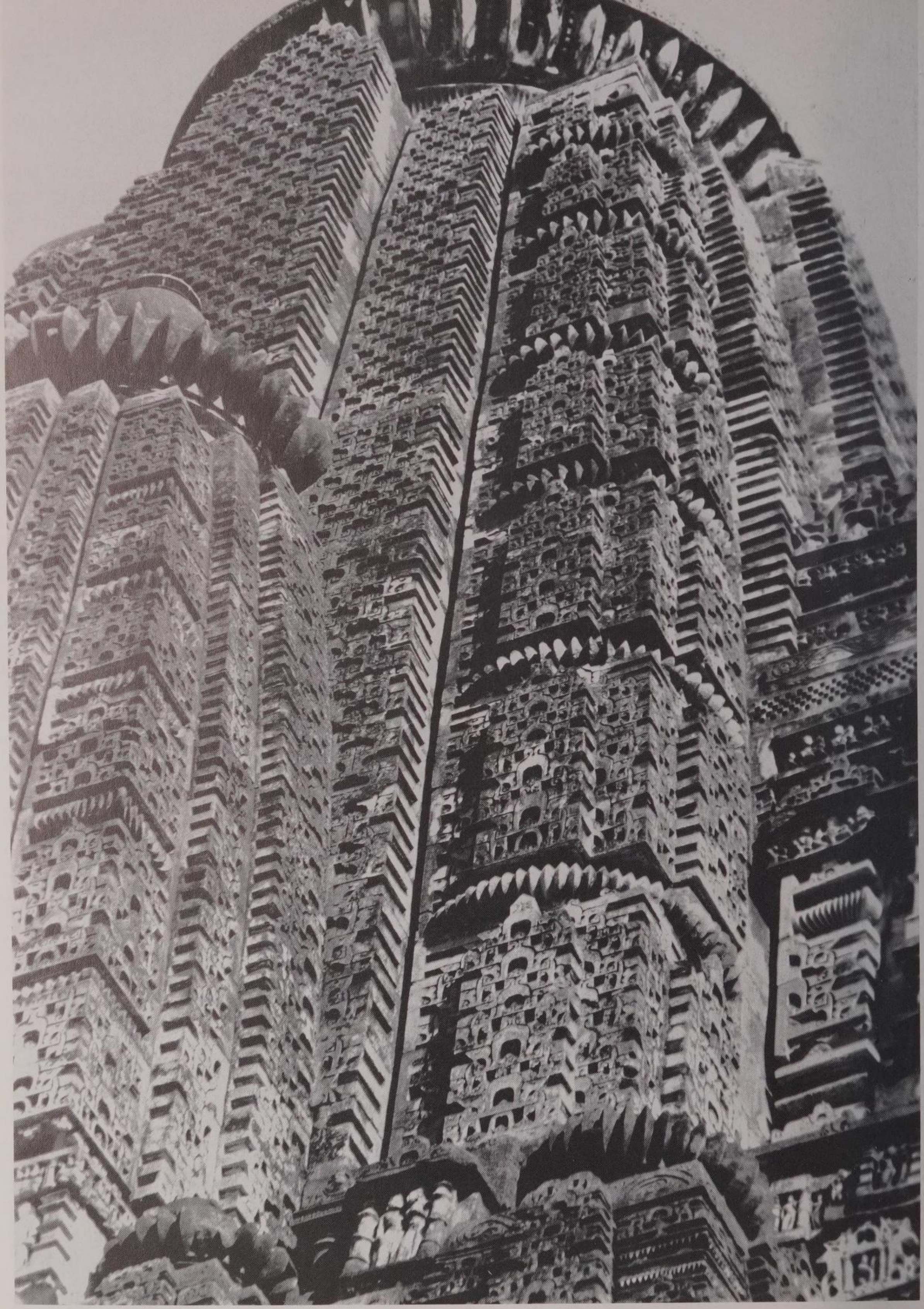
228. Rājarāni Temple, tower detail

229. Lingarāja Temple, general view, Bhubaneśvar

230. Lingarāja Temple, general view, Bhubaneśvar

231. Lingarāja Temple, general view, Bhubaneśvar

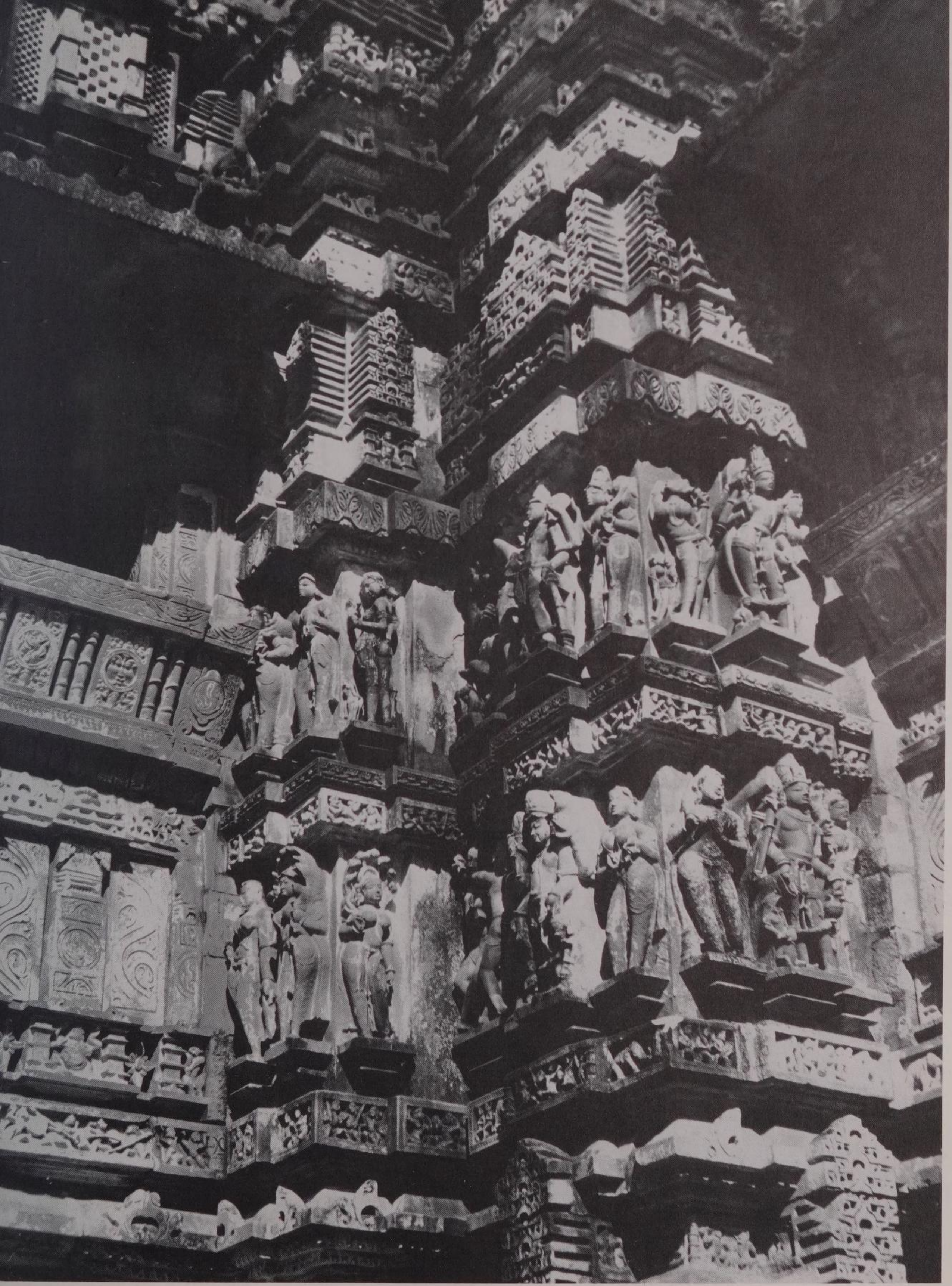
232. Lakshmana and Matangeśvara temples, Khajurāho



233. Lakshmana Temple, tower detail

234. Lakshmana Temple, tower detail

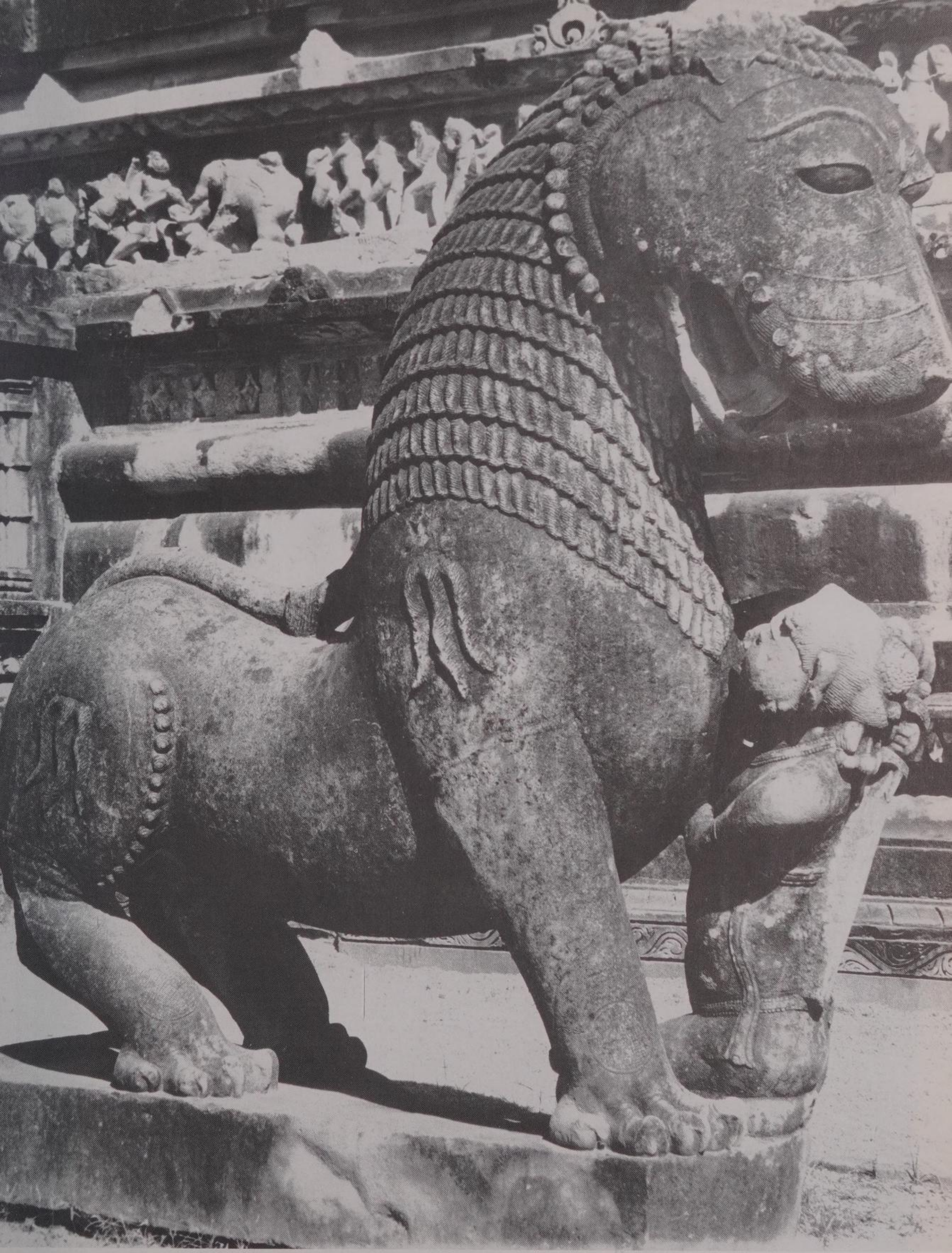
235. Lakshmana Temple, balcony detail



236. Lakshmana Temple, detail

237. Lakshmana Temple, platform detail

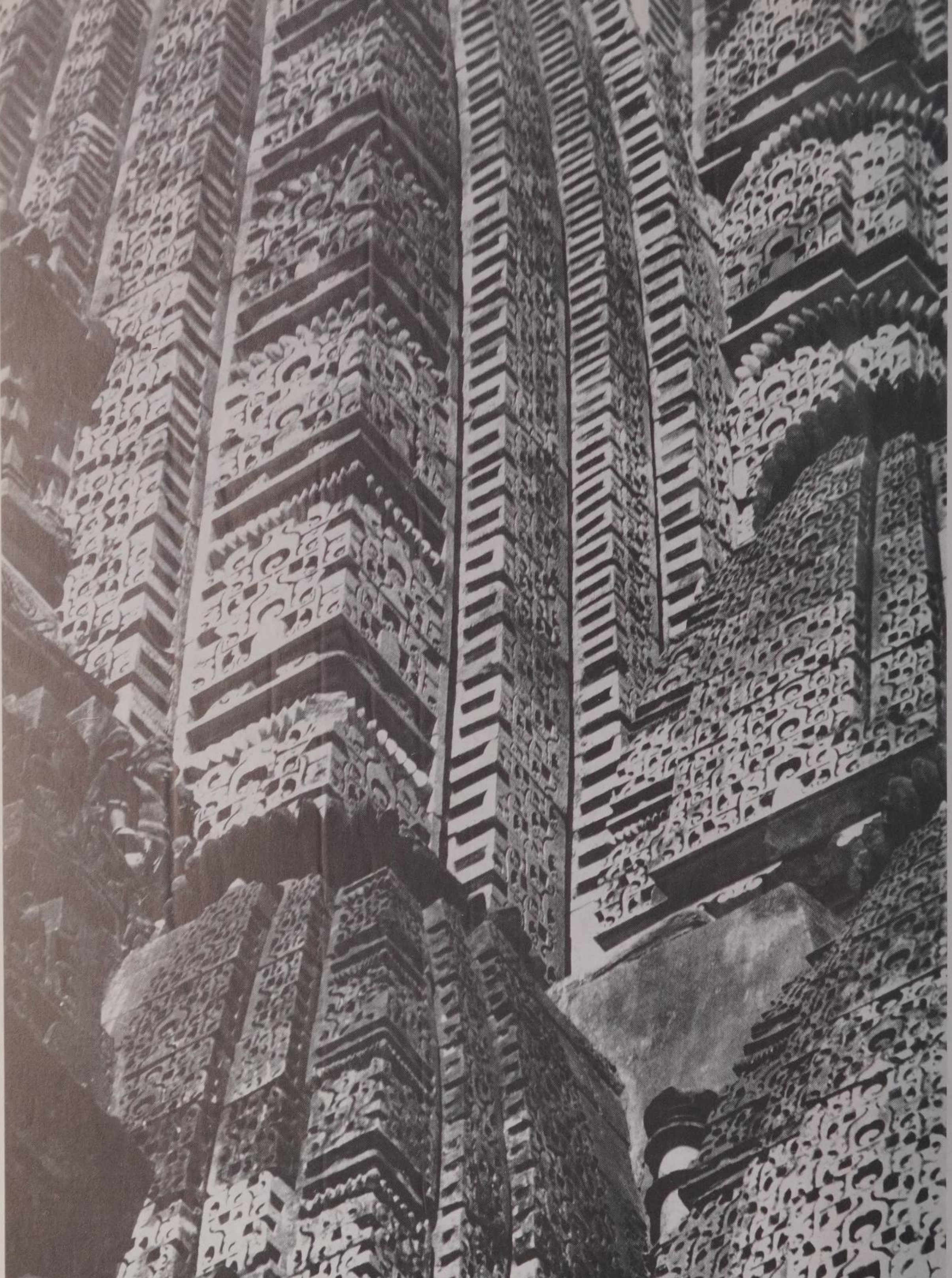
238. Lakshmana Temple, platform detail



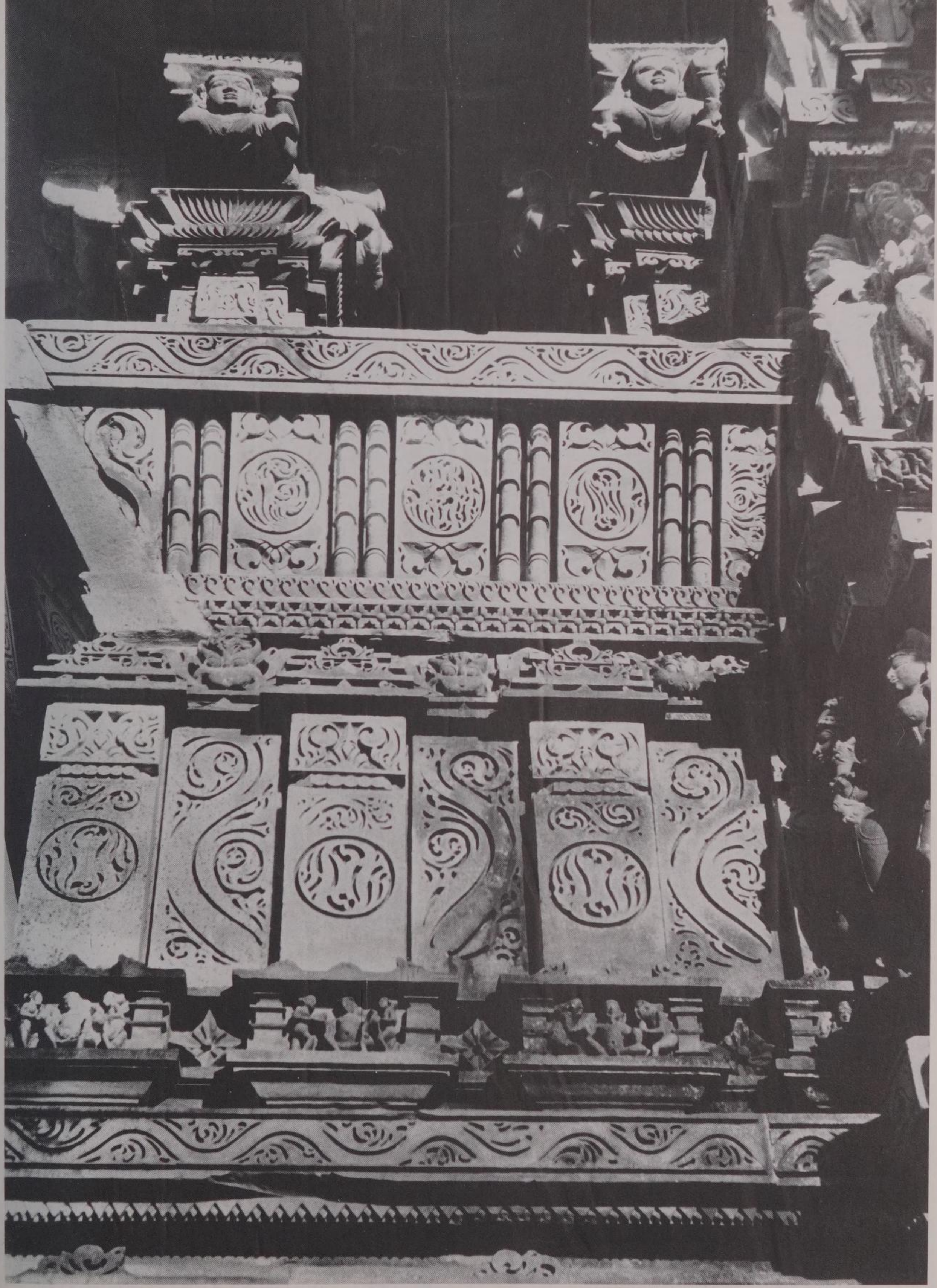
239. Lakshmana Temple, lion

240. Viśhvanātha Temple, Khajurāho

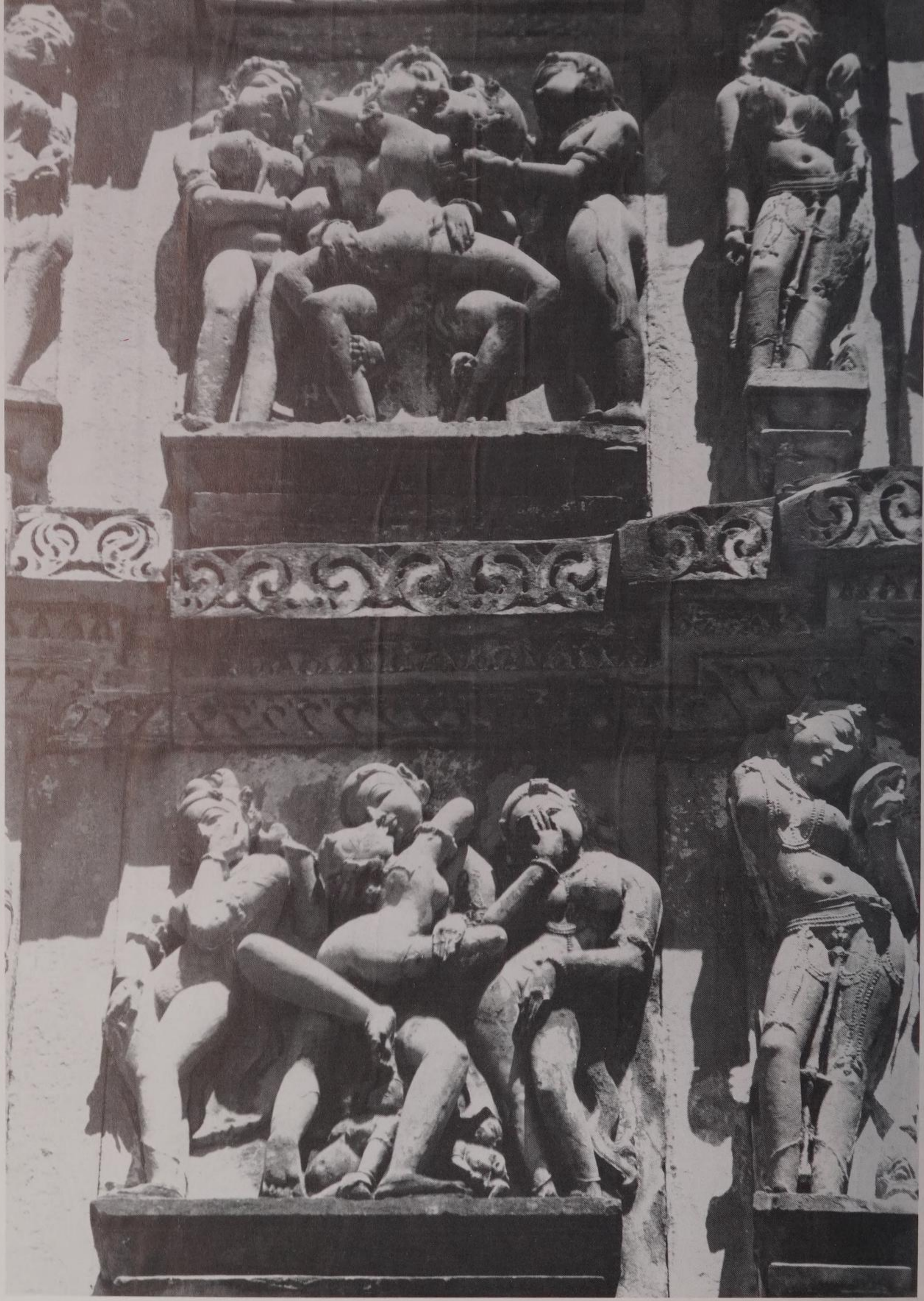
241. Viśhvanātha Temple, view of bands and tower



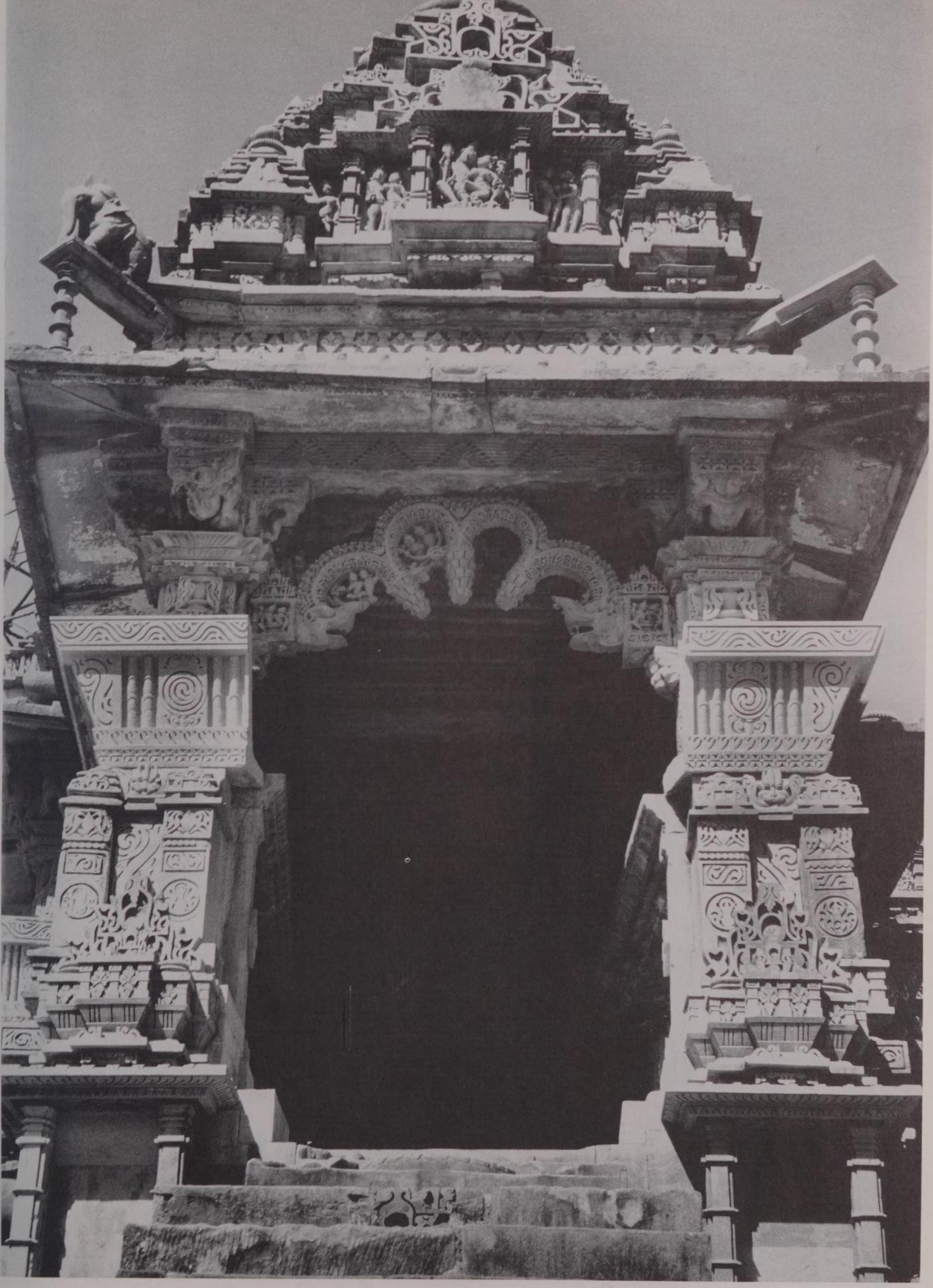
242. Viśhvanātha Temple, tower detail



243. Viśhvanātha Temple, end view of balcony



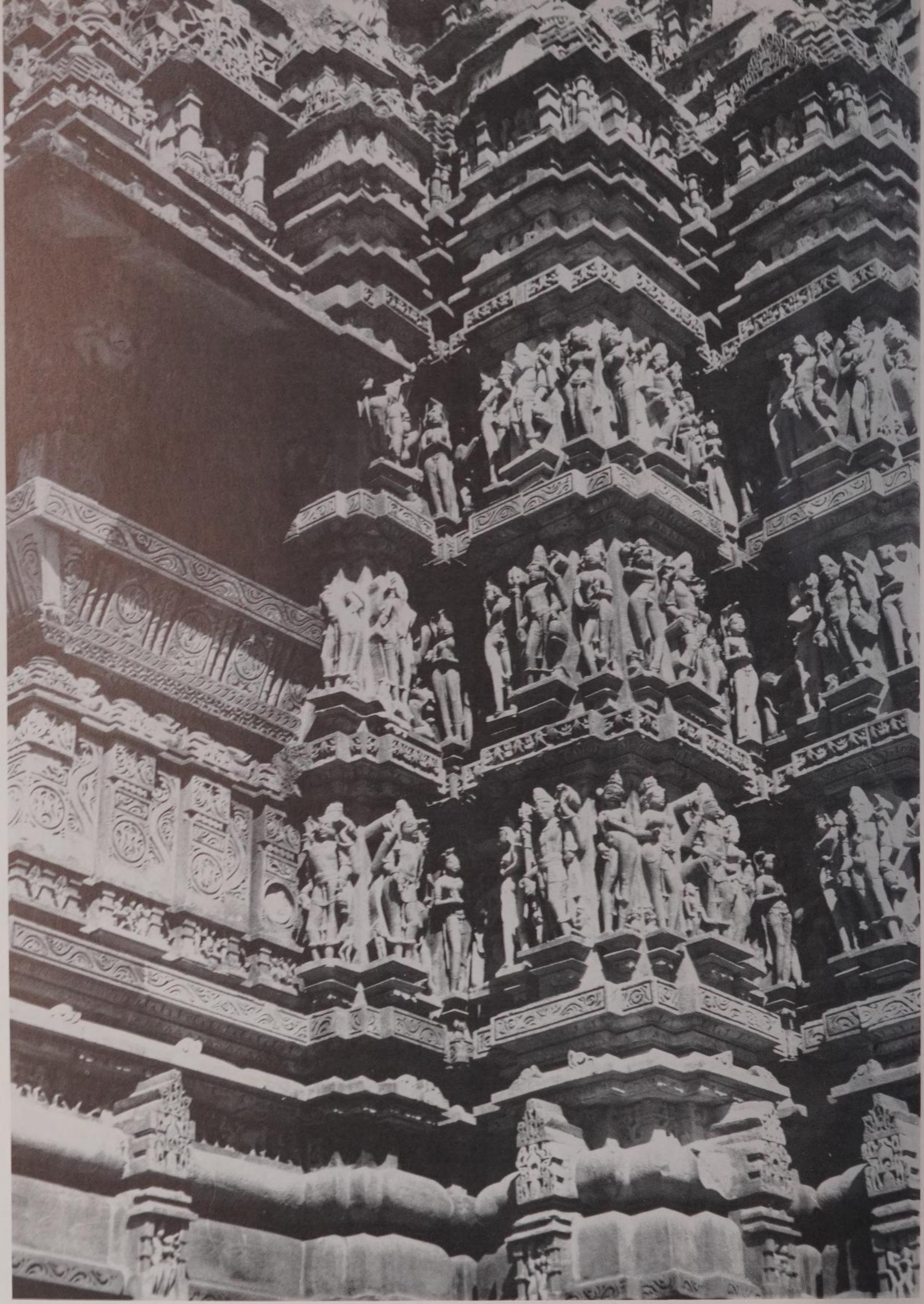
244. Viśhvanātha Temple, frieze detail



245. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, entrance, Khajurāho

246. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, entrance detail

247. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, entrance detail



248. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, horizontal figure bands

249. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, detail of horizontal figure bands

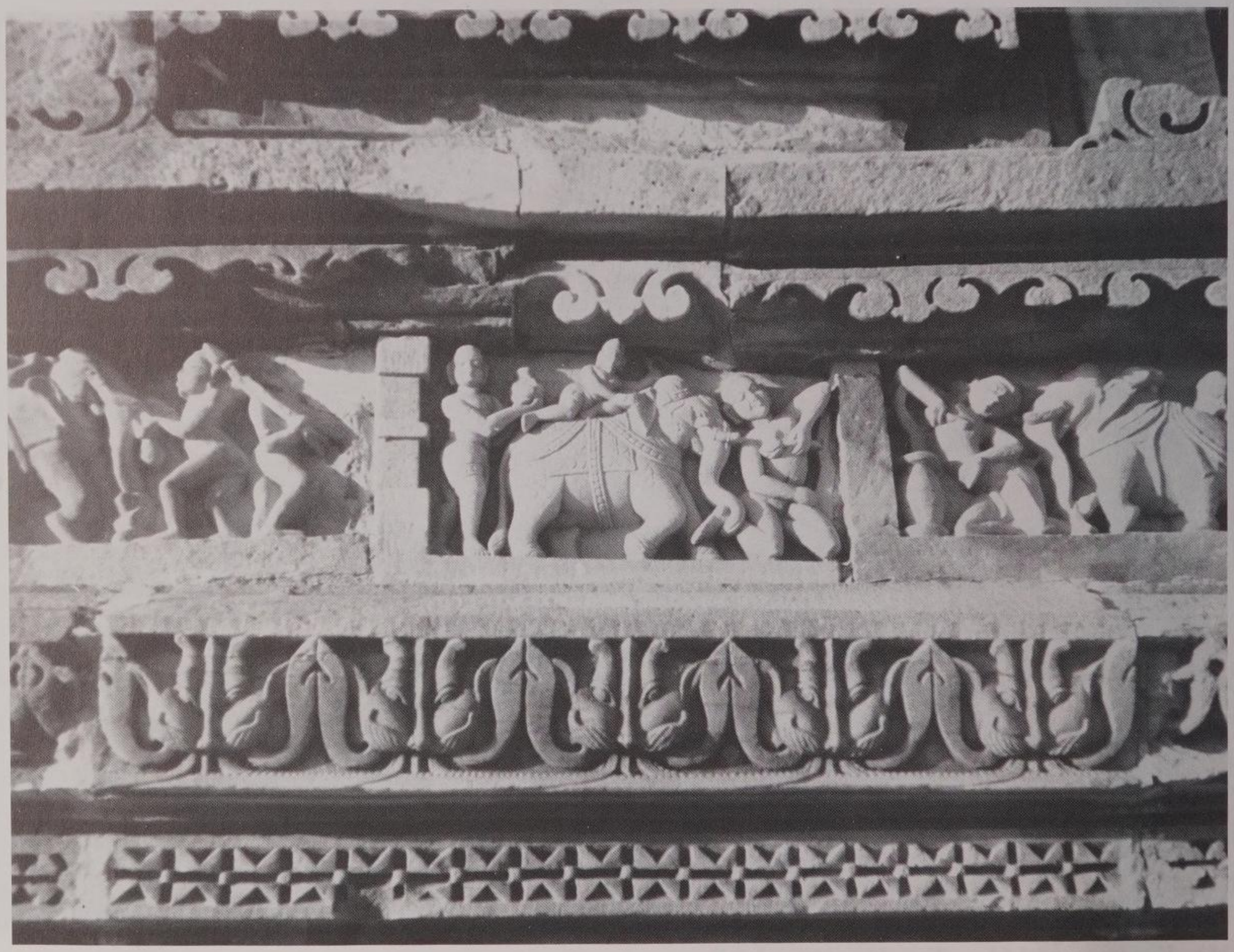
250. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, detail of figures

251. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, detail of figures

252. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, detail

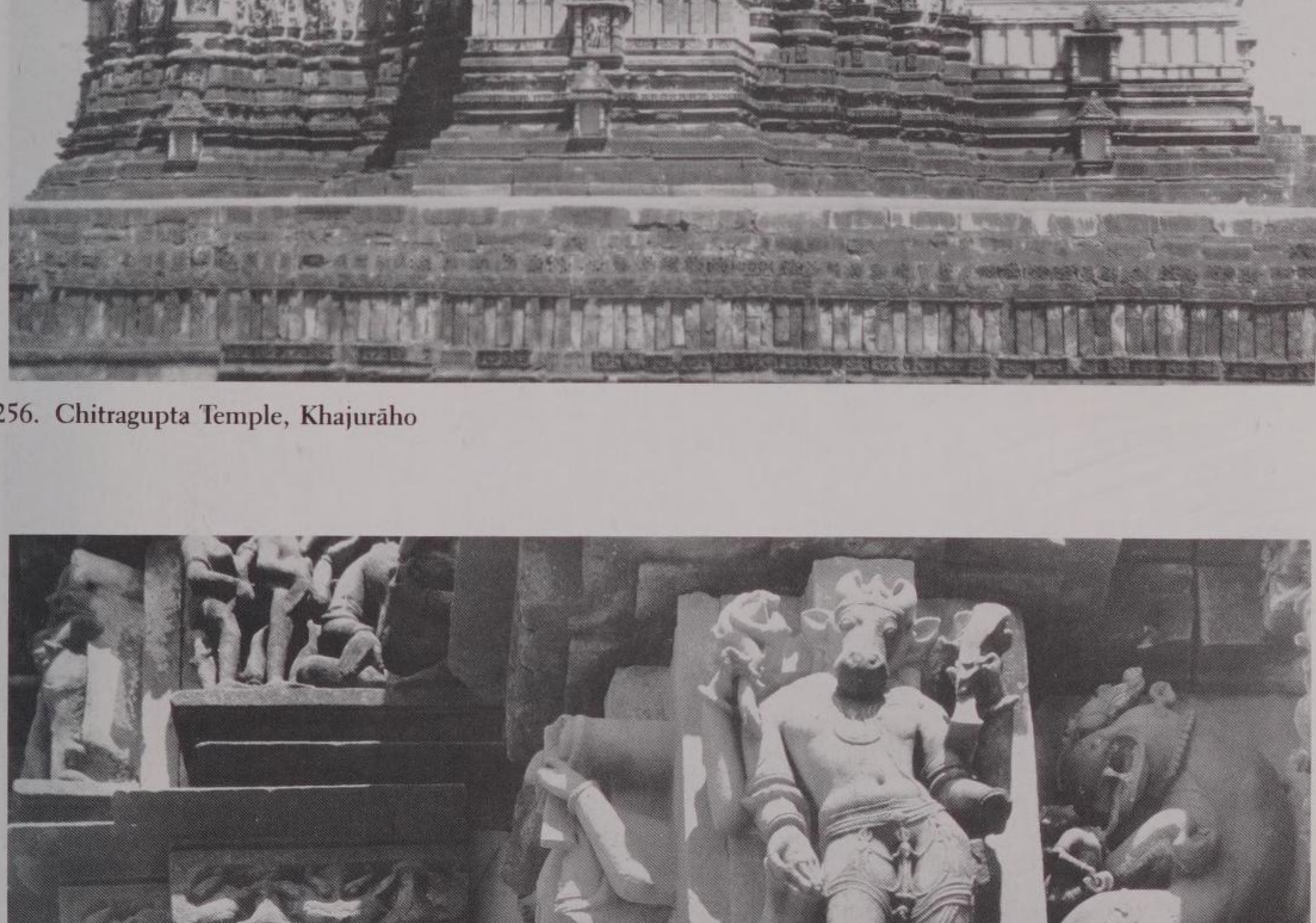
253. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, interior detail

254. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, platform detail

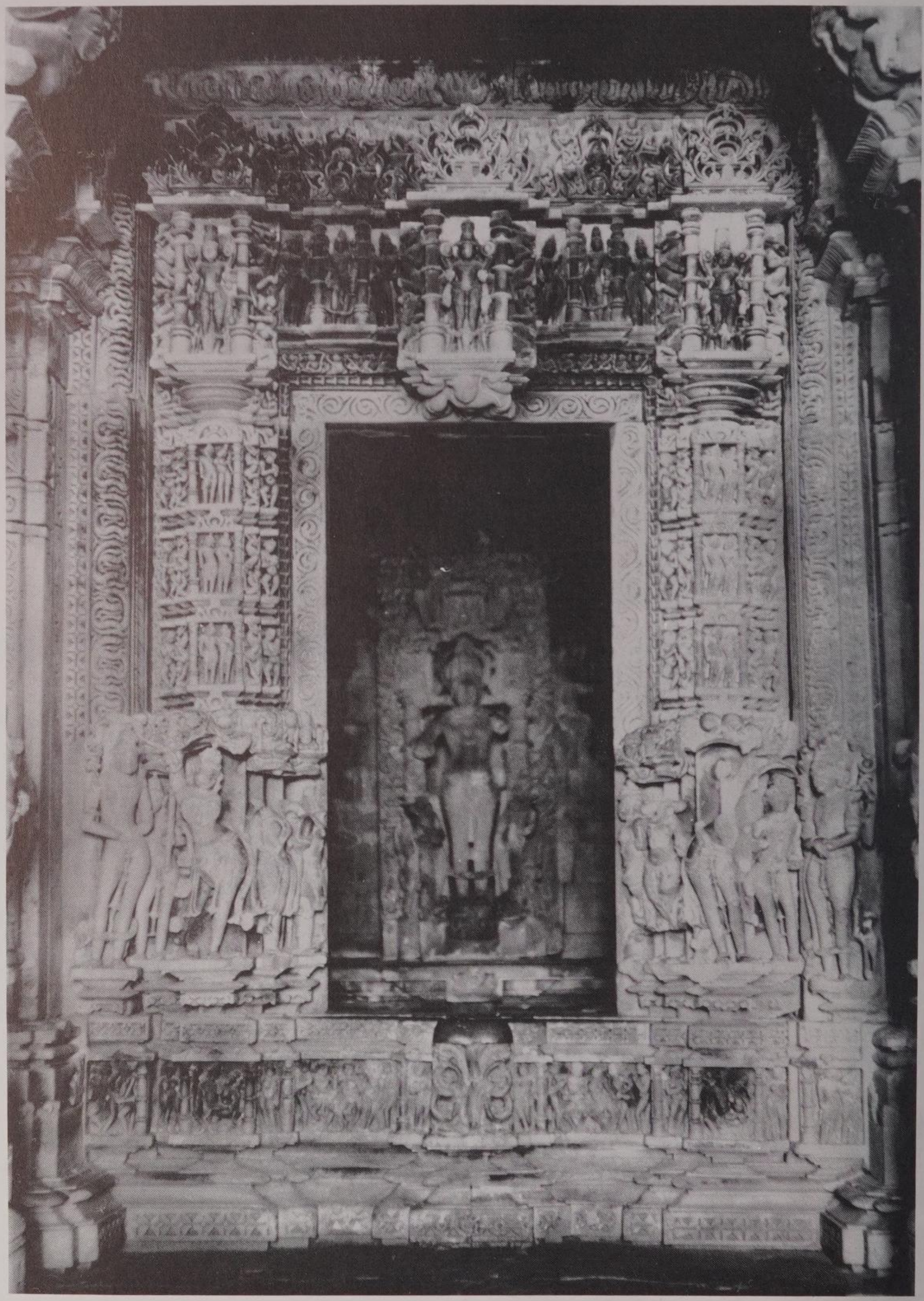


255. Kaṇḍāriya Mahādeva Temple, platform detail

256. Chitragupta Temple, Khajurāho



257. Chitragupta Temple, detail



258. Chitragupta Temple, garbha griha

259. Chitragupta Temple, detail of plate 258

260. Pārshvanātha Temple, Khajurāho

261. Pārshvanātha Temple, garbha griha

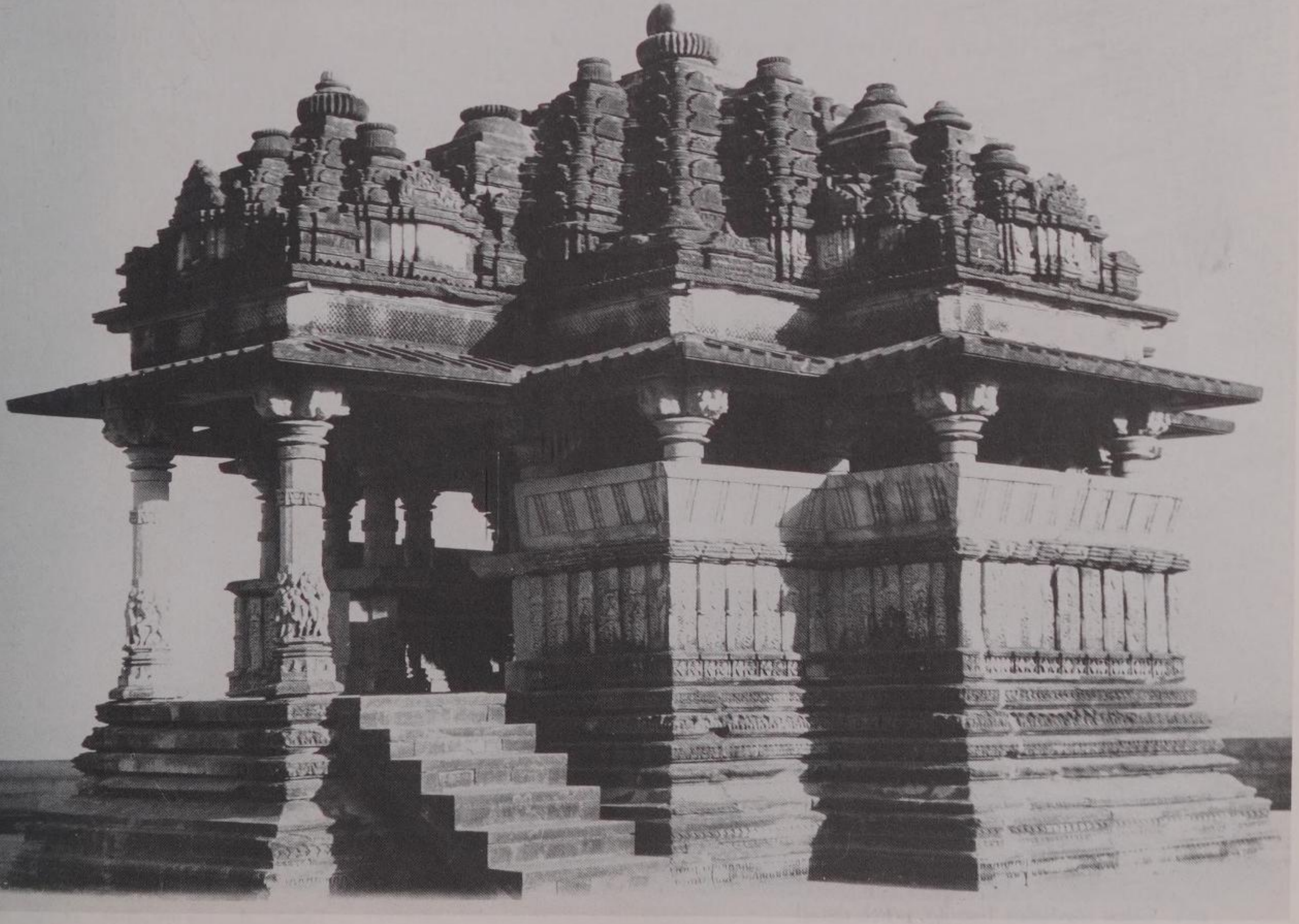
262. Pārshvanātha Temple, detail

263. Pārshvanātha Temple, Rāma and Sīta detail

264. Fragment detail, Khajurāho

265. Fragment detail, Khajurāho

266. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, Gwalior Fort



267. Little Sās-Bahu Temple, Gwalior Fort

268. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, porch detail

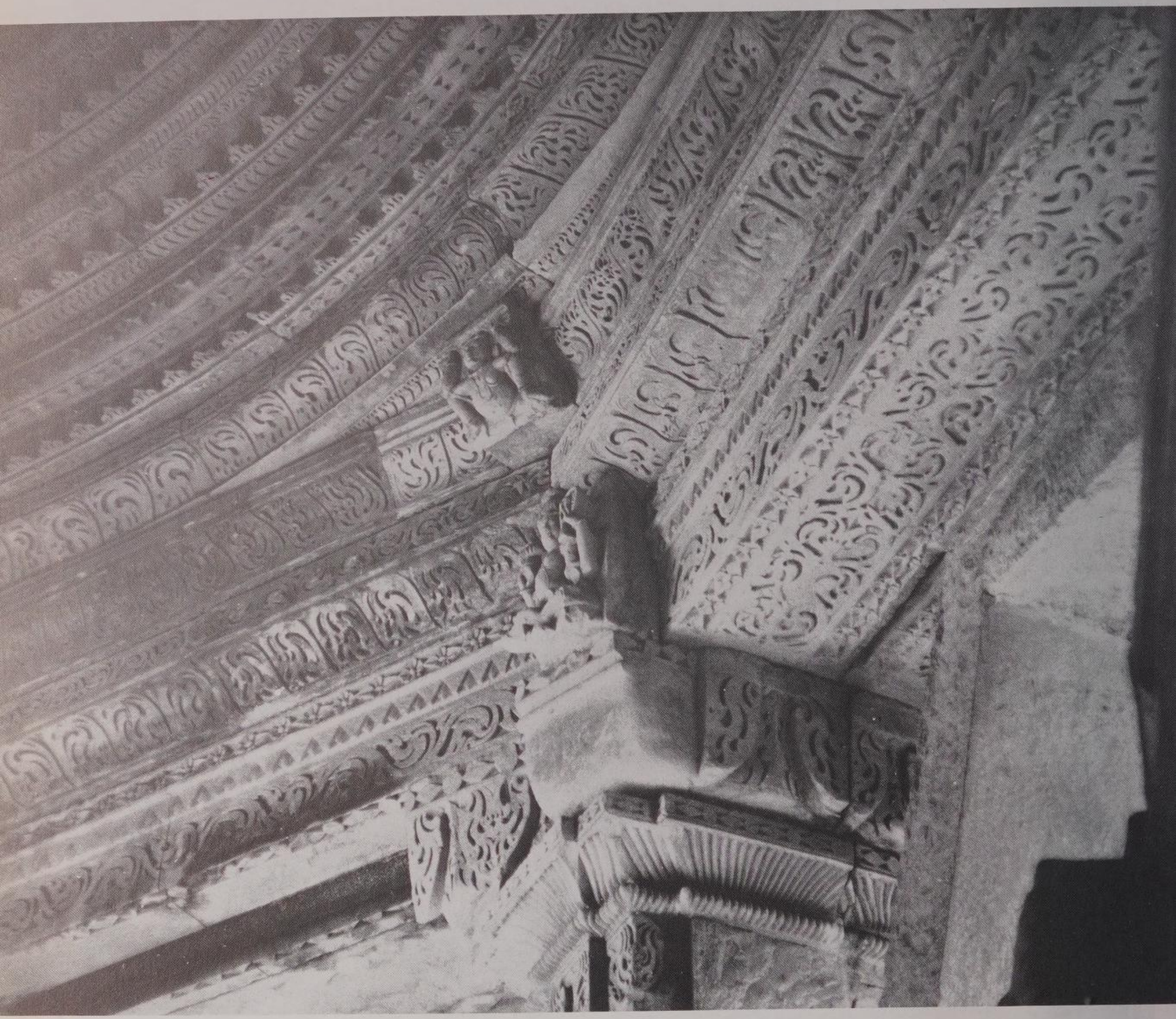
269. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, detail

270. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, detail

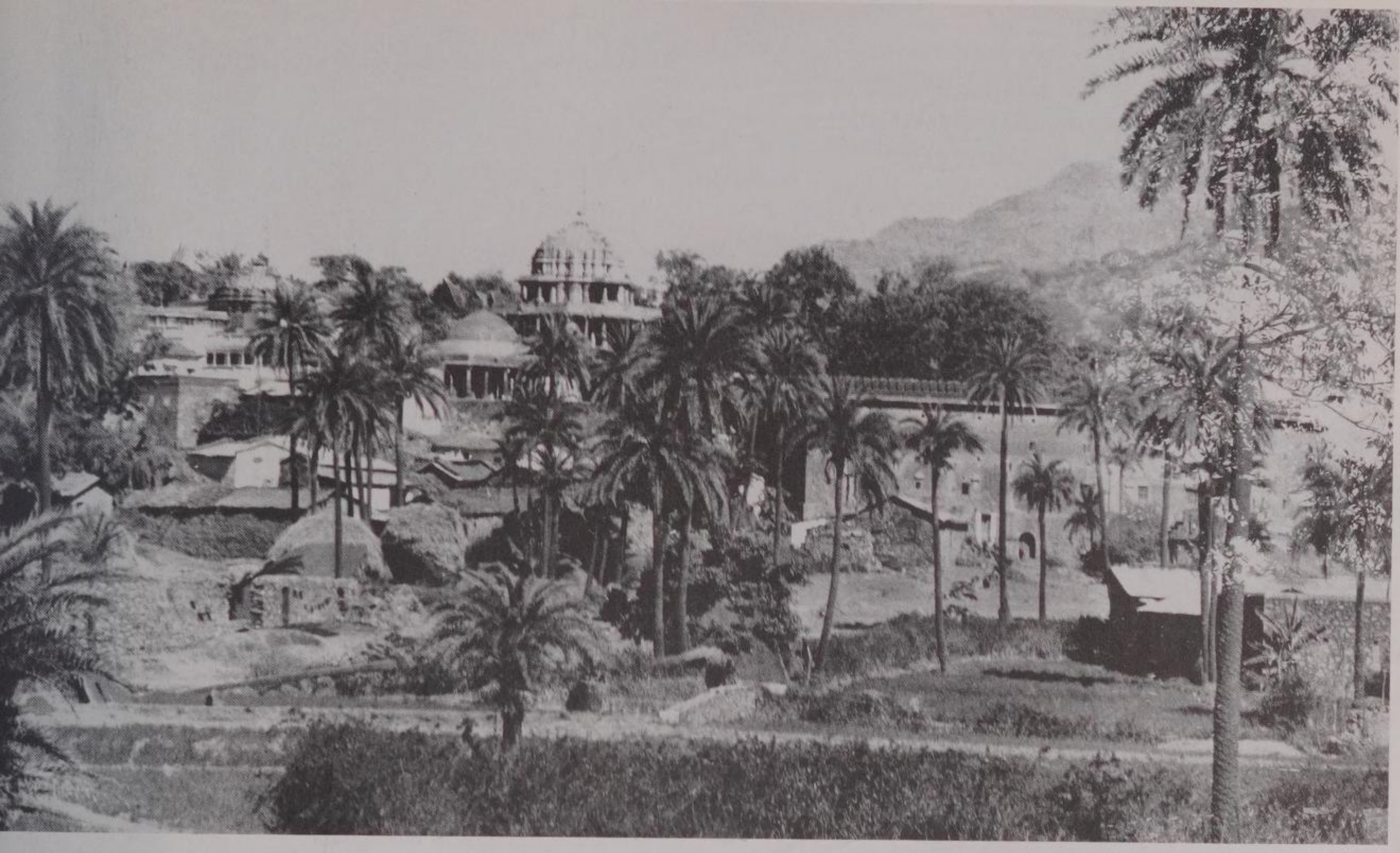
271. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, interior detail

272. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, pillar detail

273. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, interior pillar detail

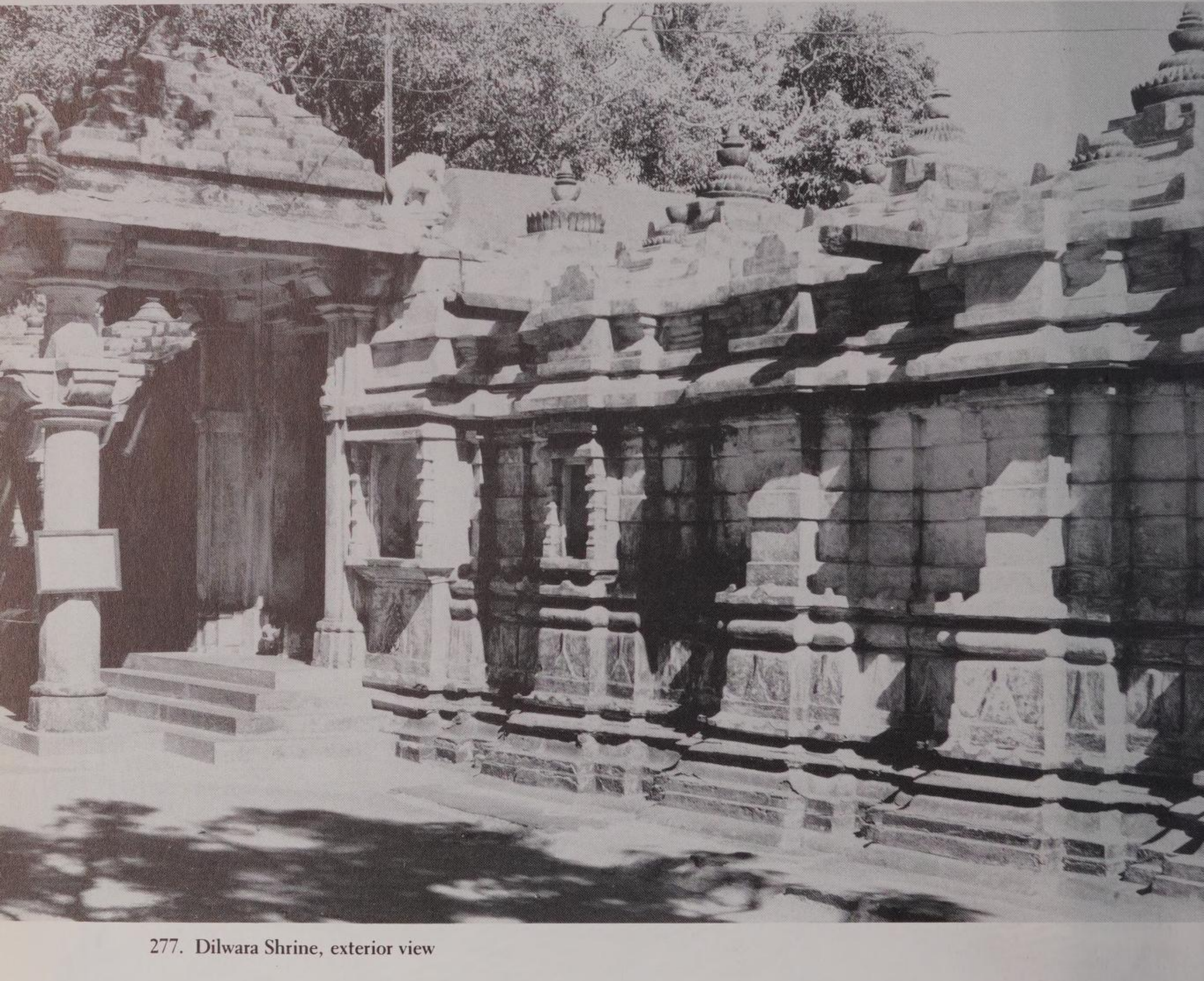


274. Great Sās-Bahu Temple, ceiling detail



275. Dilwara Shrine, general view, Mount Ābu

276. Dilwara shrine, roof detail



277. Dilwara Shrine, exterior view

278. Vimila Vasahī Temple, interior detail

279. Vimila Vasahī Temple, ceiling detail

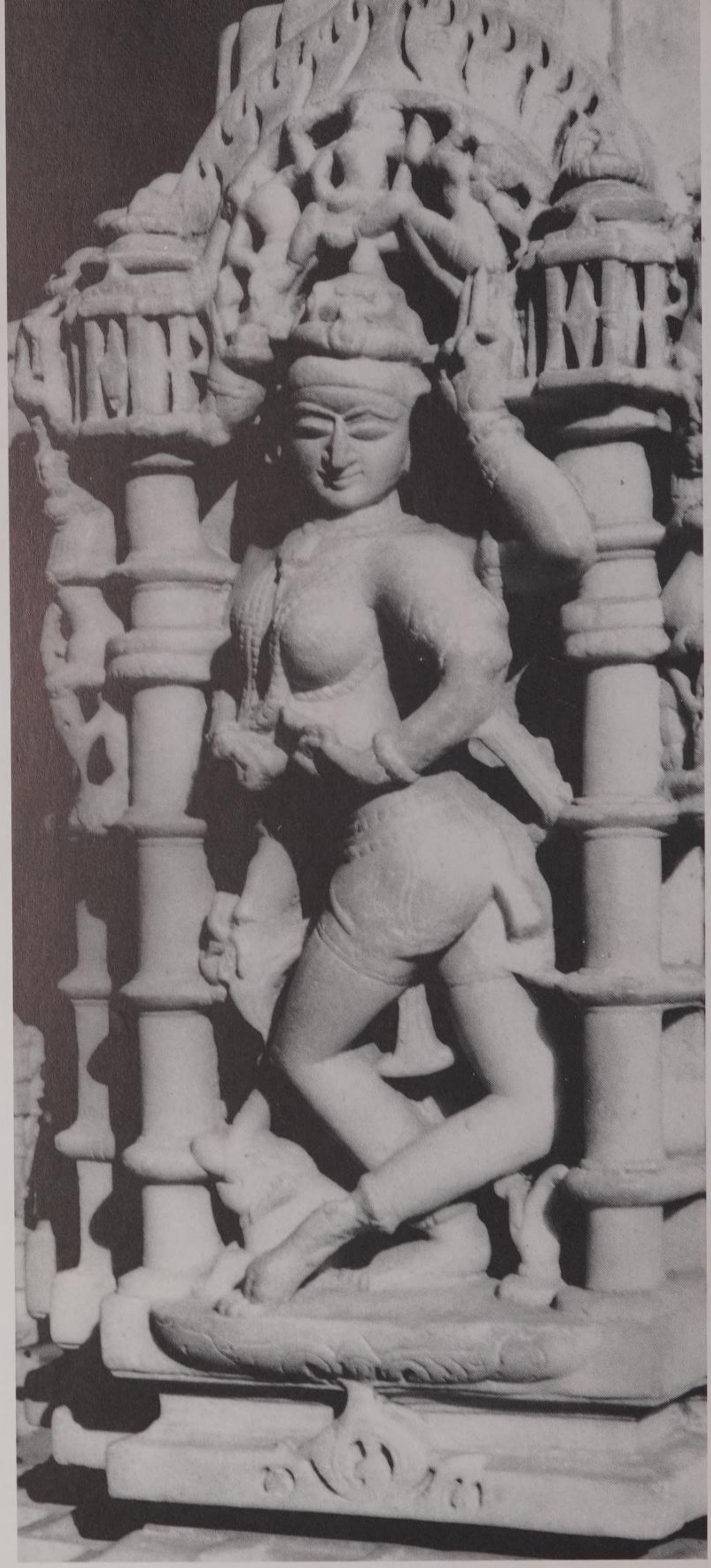
280. Vimila Vasahī Temple, interior detail

281. Vimila Vasahī Temple, interior detail

282. Vimila Vasahī Temple, interior detail

283. Vimila Vasahī Temple, interior detail

284. Vimila Vasahī Temple, pillars



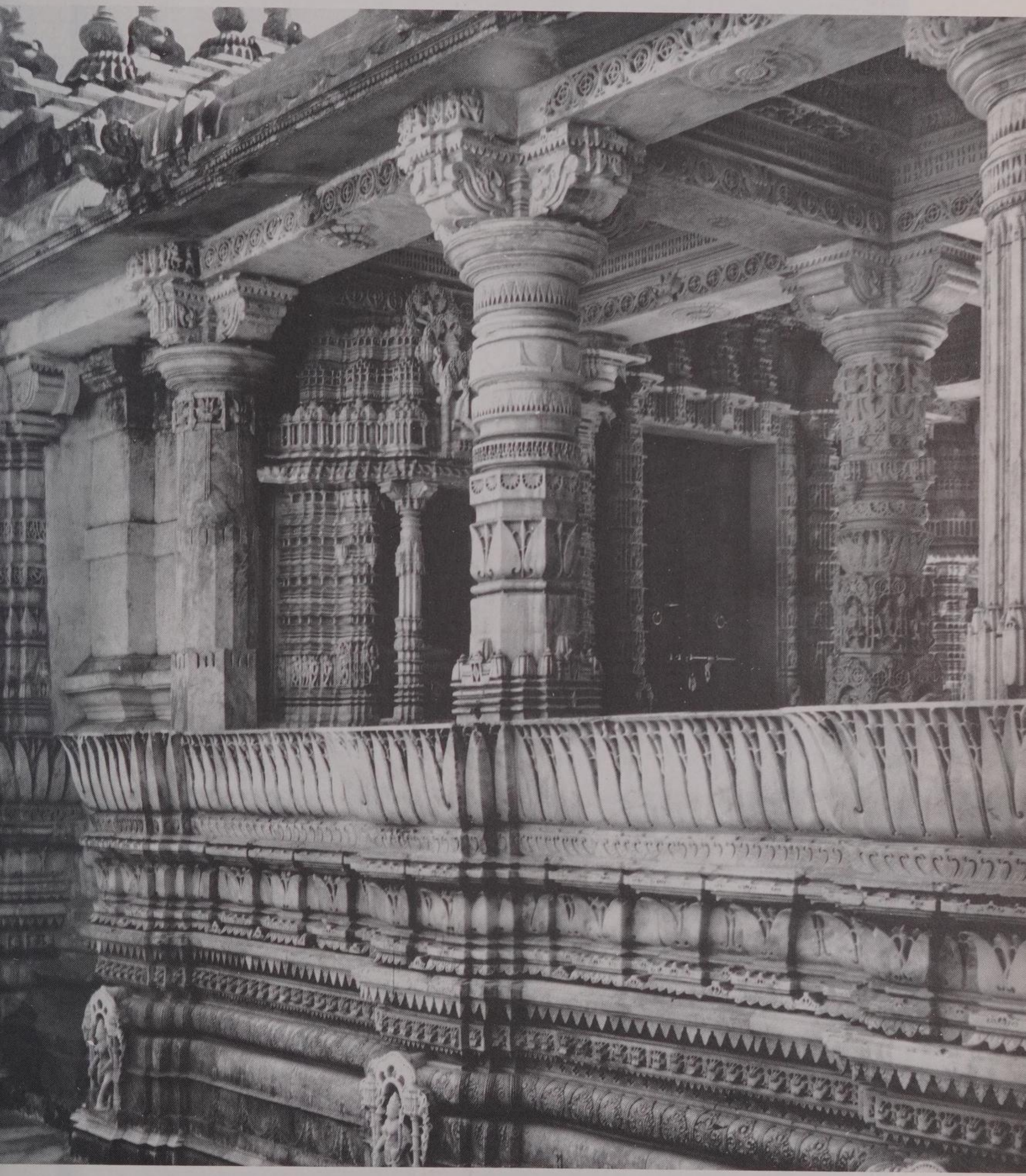
285. Vimila Vasahī Temple, detail of plate 284

286. Vimila Vasahī Temple, pillar detail

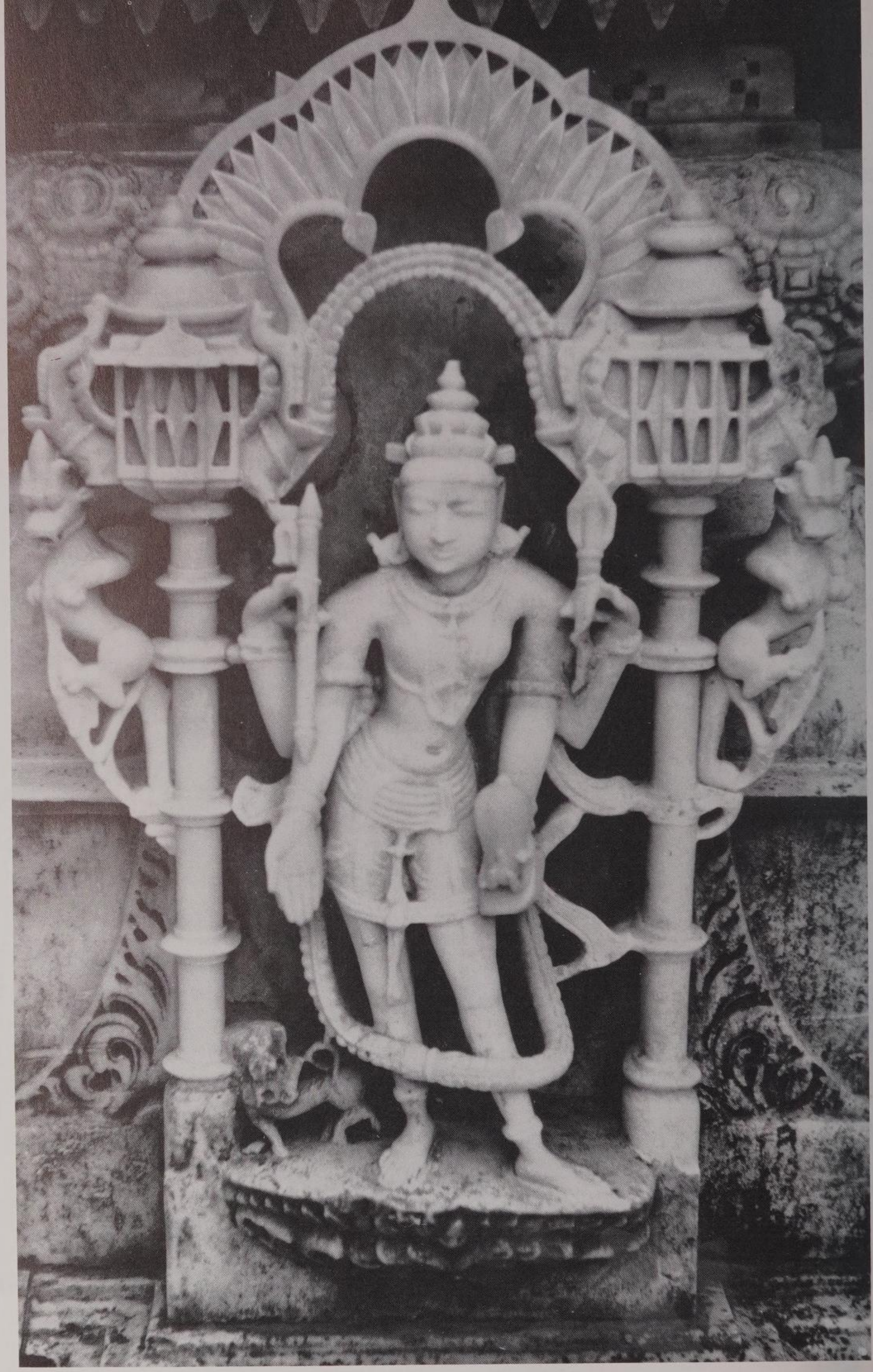
287. Vimila Vasahī Temple, pillar detail

288. Lūna Vasahī Temple, colonnade, Dilwara, Mount Ābu

289. Lūna Vasahī Temple, cell detail



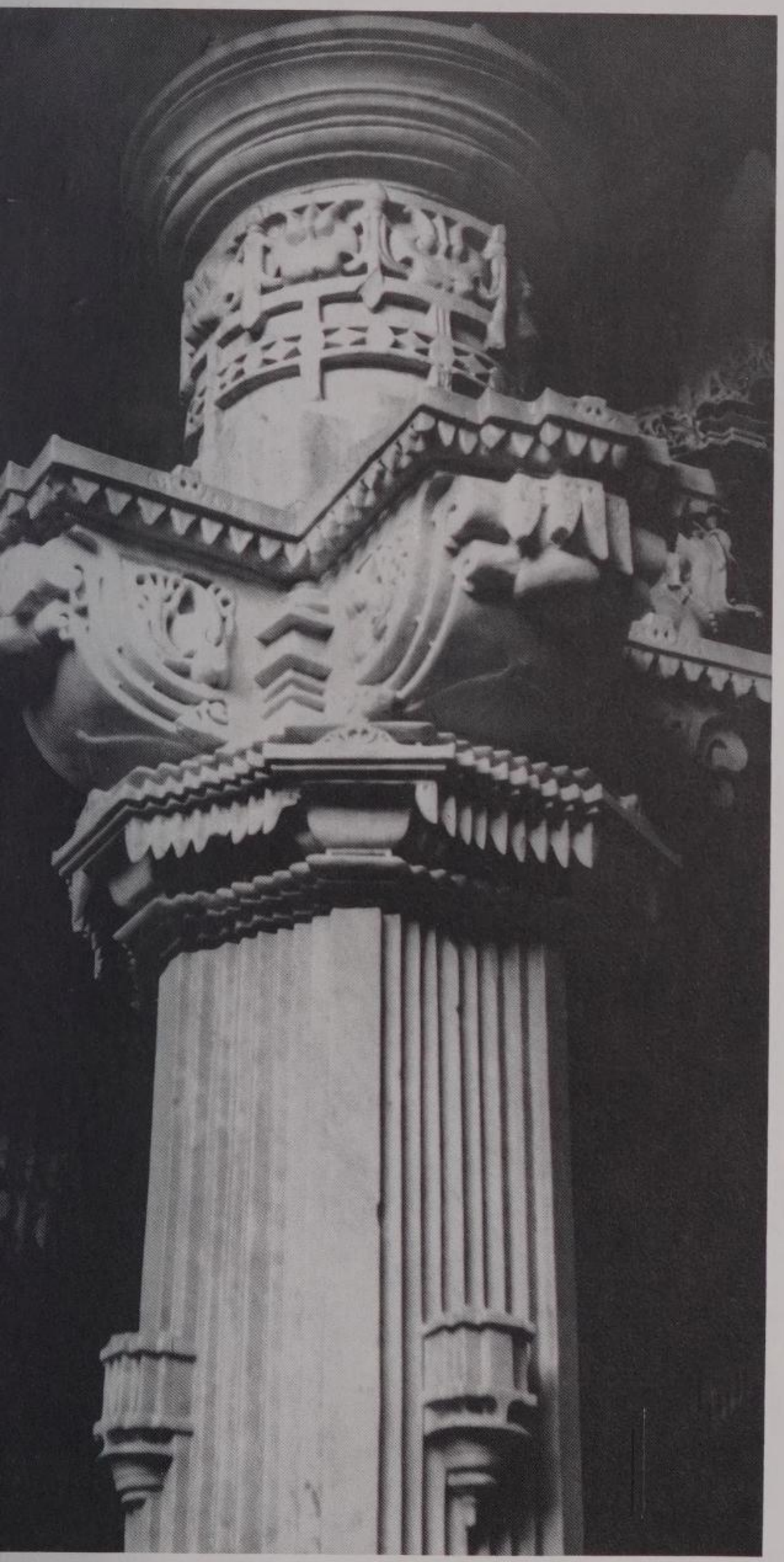
290. Lūna Vasahī Temple, shrine detail



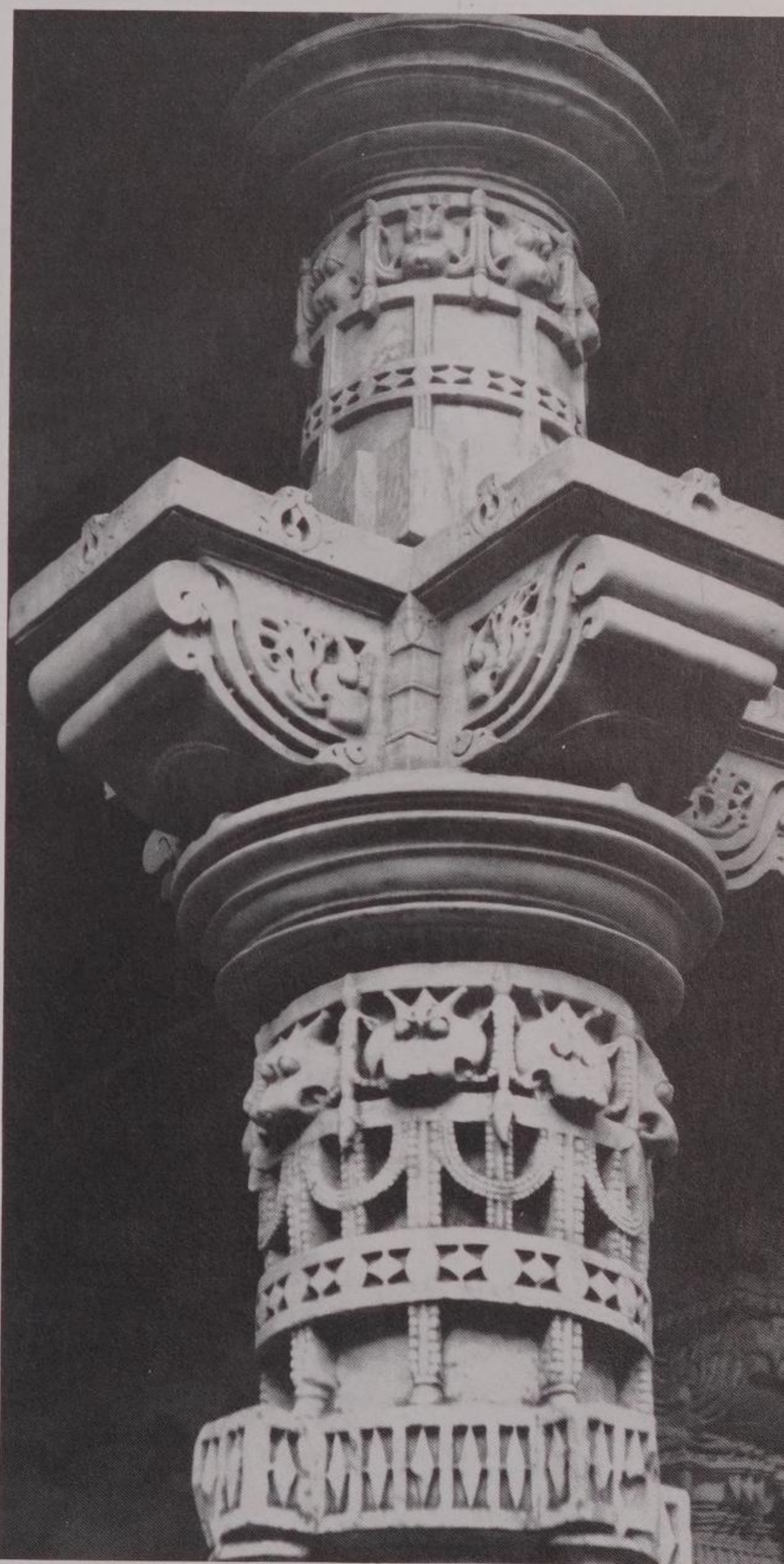
291. Lūna Vasahī Temple, figure detail

292. Lūna Vasahī Temple, shrine detail

293. Lūna Vasahī Temple, ceiling detail



294. Lūna Vasahī Temple, pillar detail



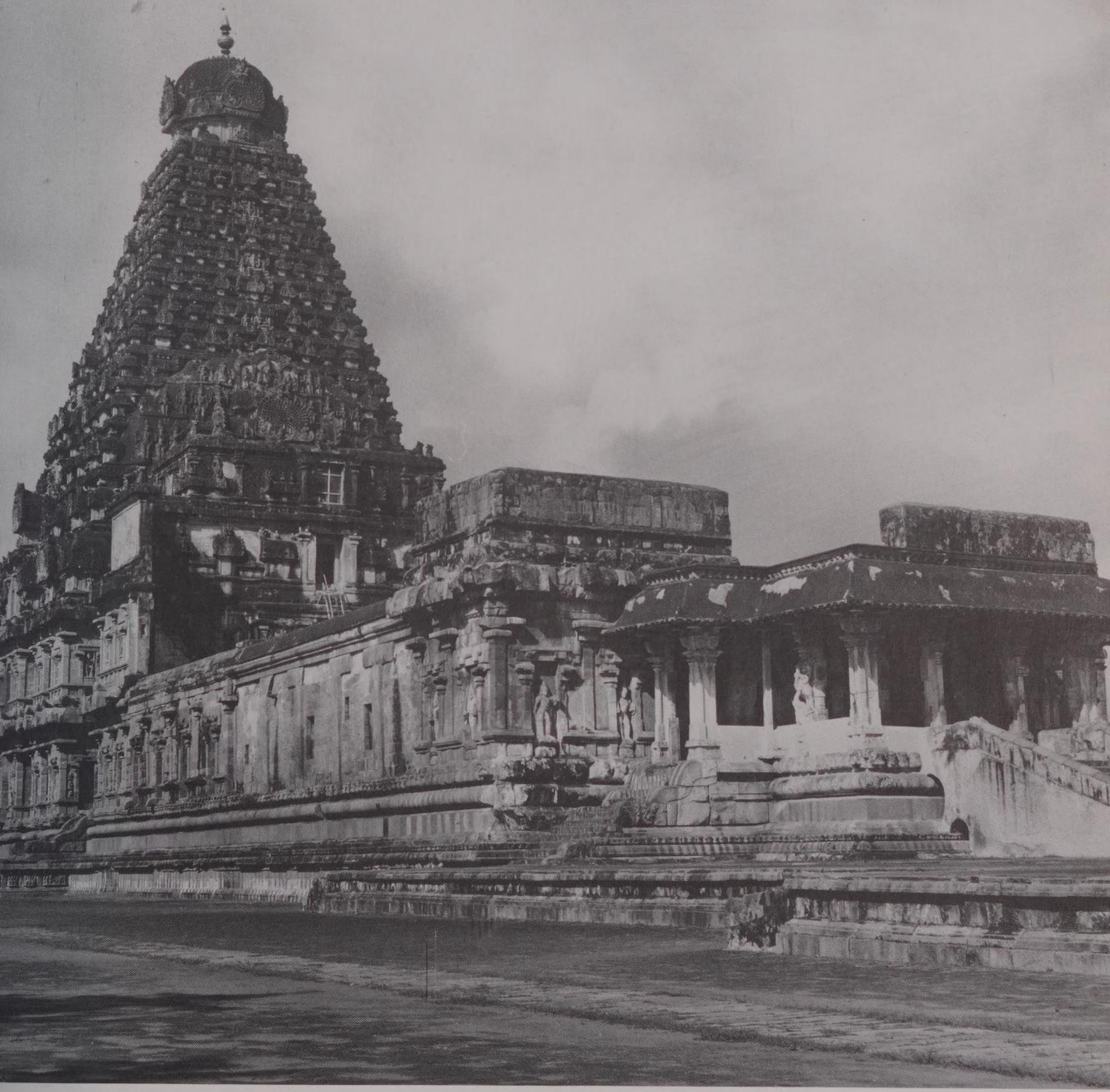
295. Lūna Vasahī Temple, pillar detail

296. Rājarājeśvara Temple, Tañjavūr

297. Rājarājeśvara Temple, gate

298. Rājarājeśvara Temple, gate detail

299. Rājarājeśvara Temple, gate detail



300. Rājarājeśvara Temple, general view

301. Rājarājeśvara Temple, wall detail

302. Rājarājeśvara Temple, wall detail

303. Rājarājeśvara Temple, side wall detail

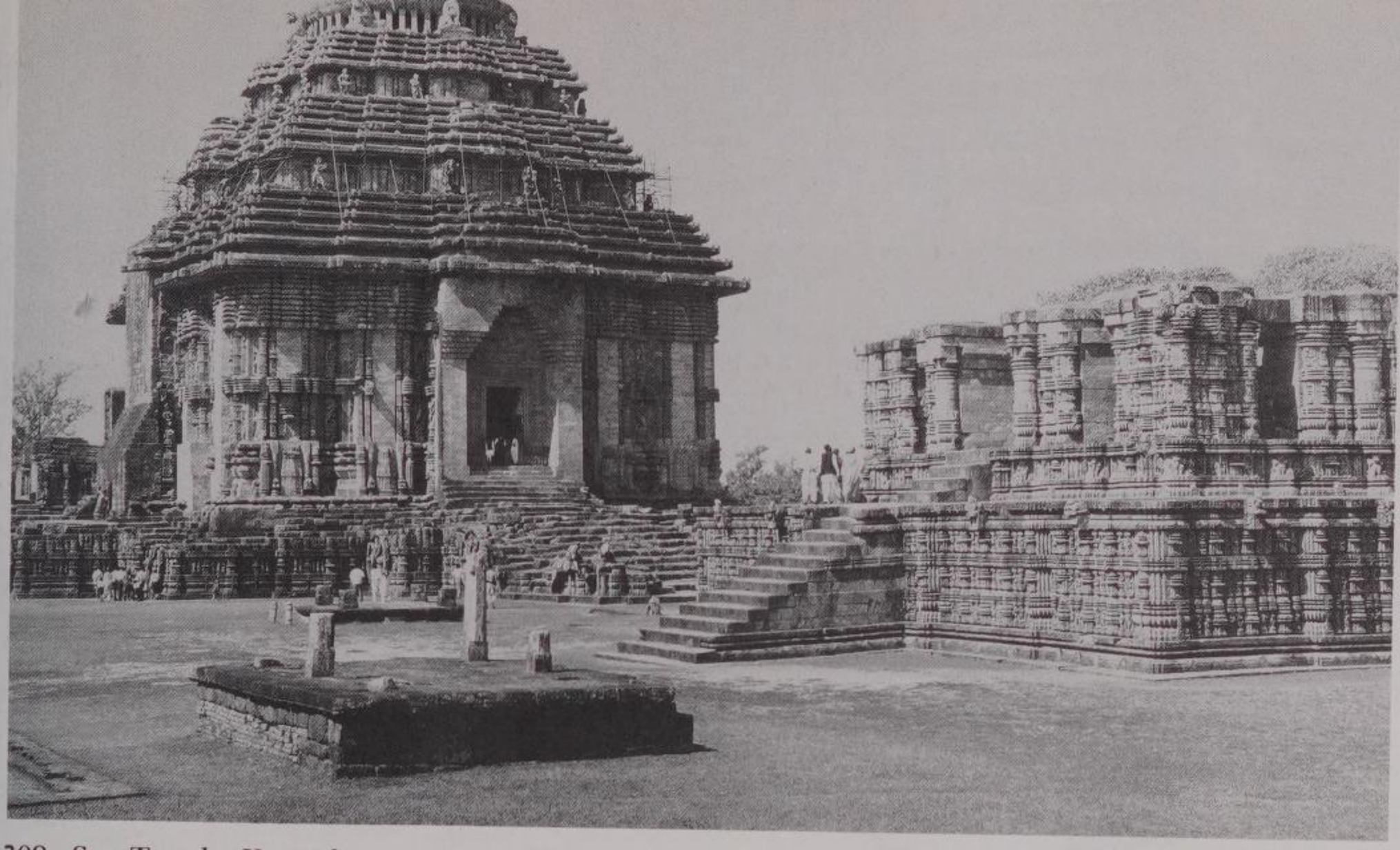
304. Rājarājeśvara Temple, side wall detail

305. Rājarājeśvara Temple, side wall detail

306. Rājarājeśvara Temple, stairway detail

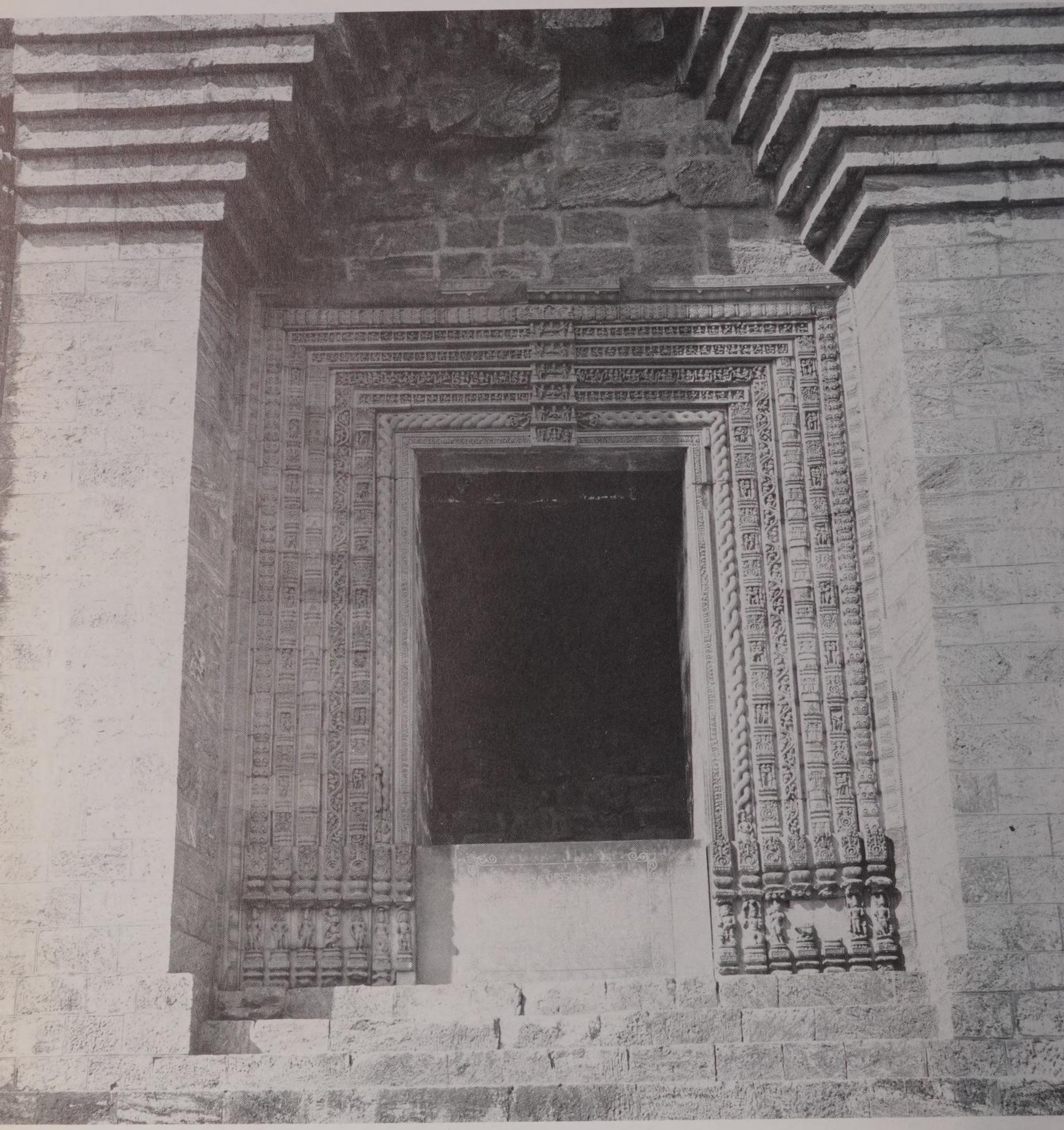
307. Rājarājeśvara Temple, stairway detail

308. Rājarājeśvara Temple, stairway detail



309. Sun Temple, Konārak

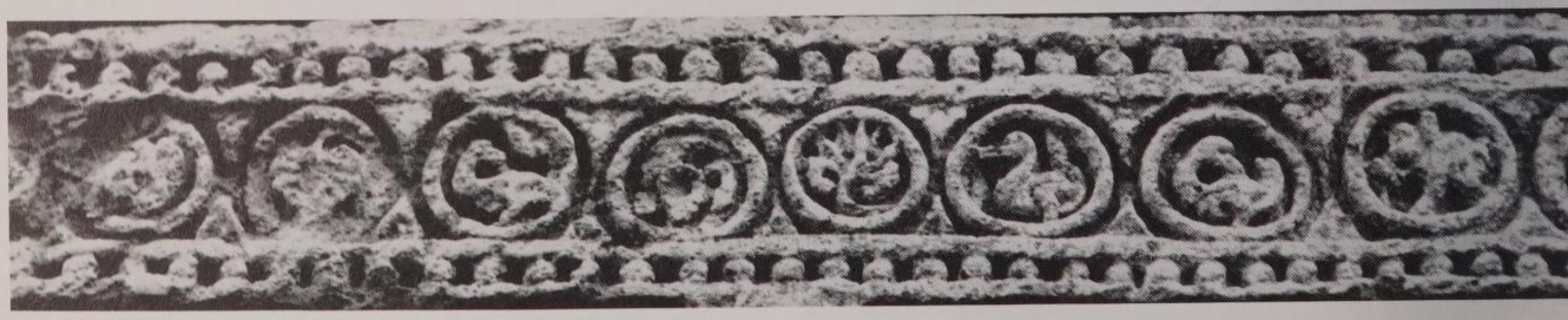
310. Sun Temple, horse detail



311. Sun Temple, east doorway

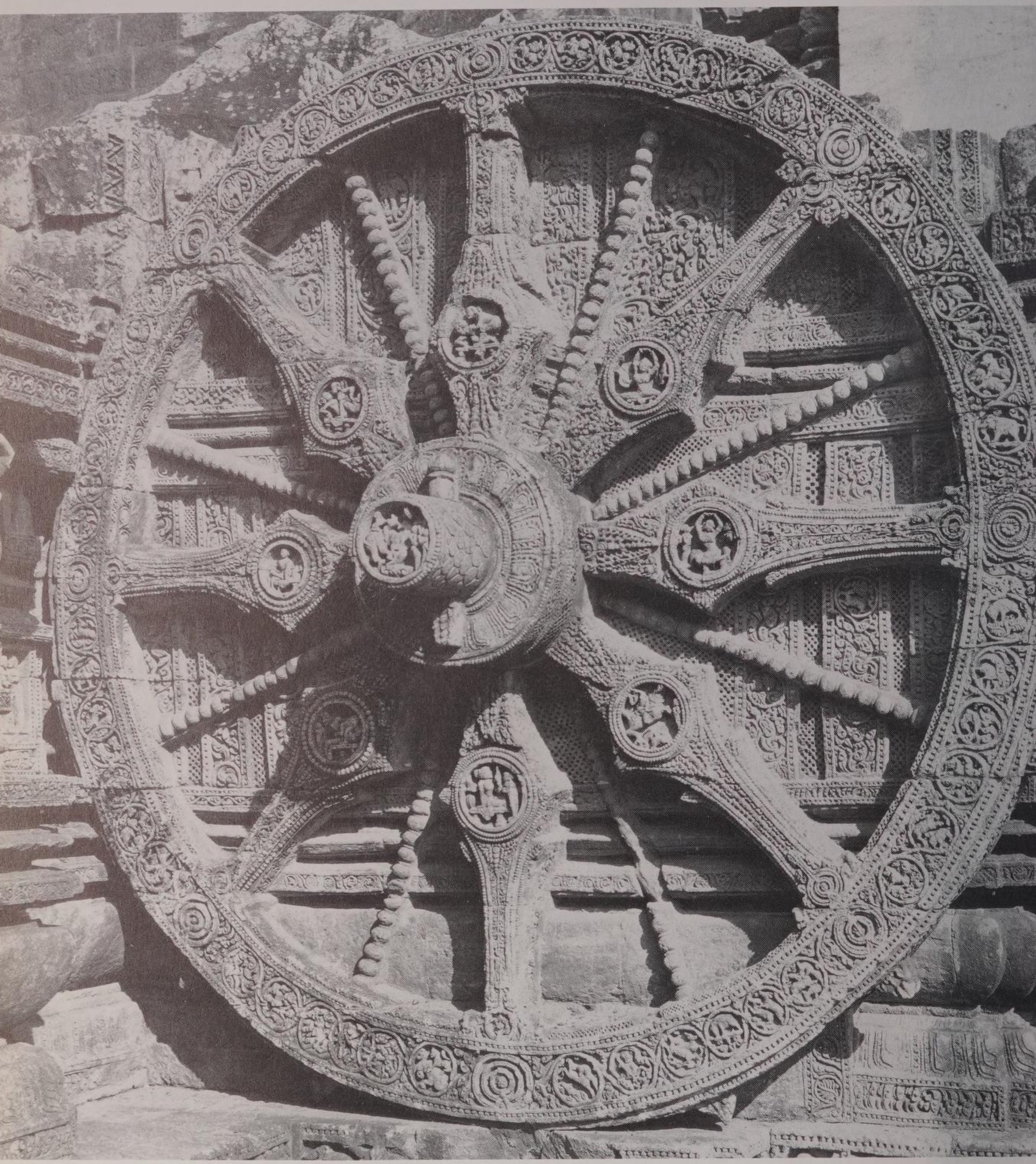
312. Sun Temple, detail of doorway bands

313. Sun Temple, wheel area detail

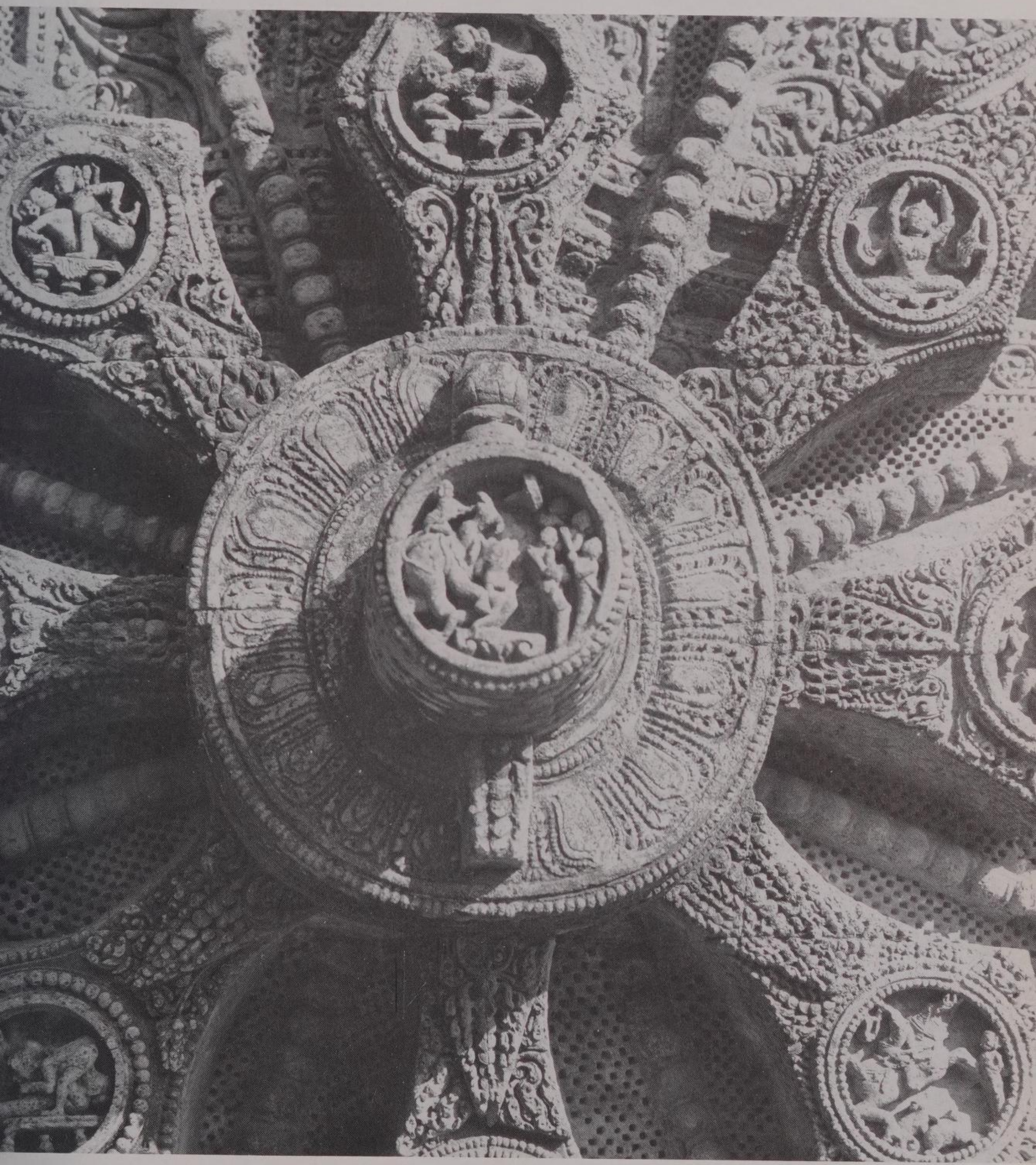


314. Sun Temple, base detail

315. Sun Temple, wheel detail

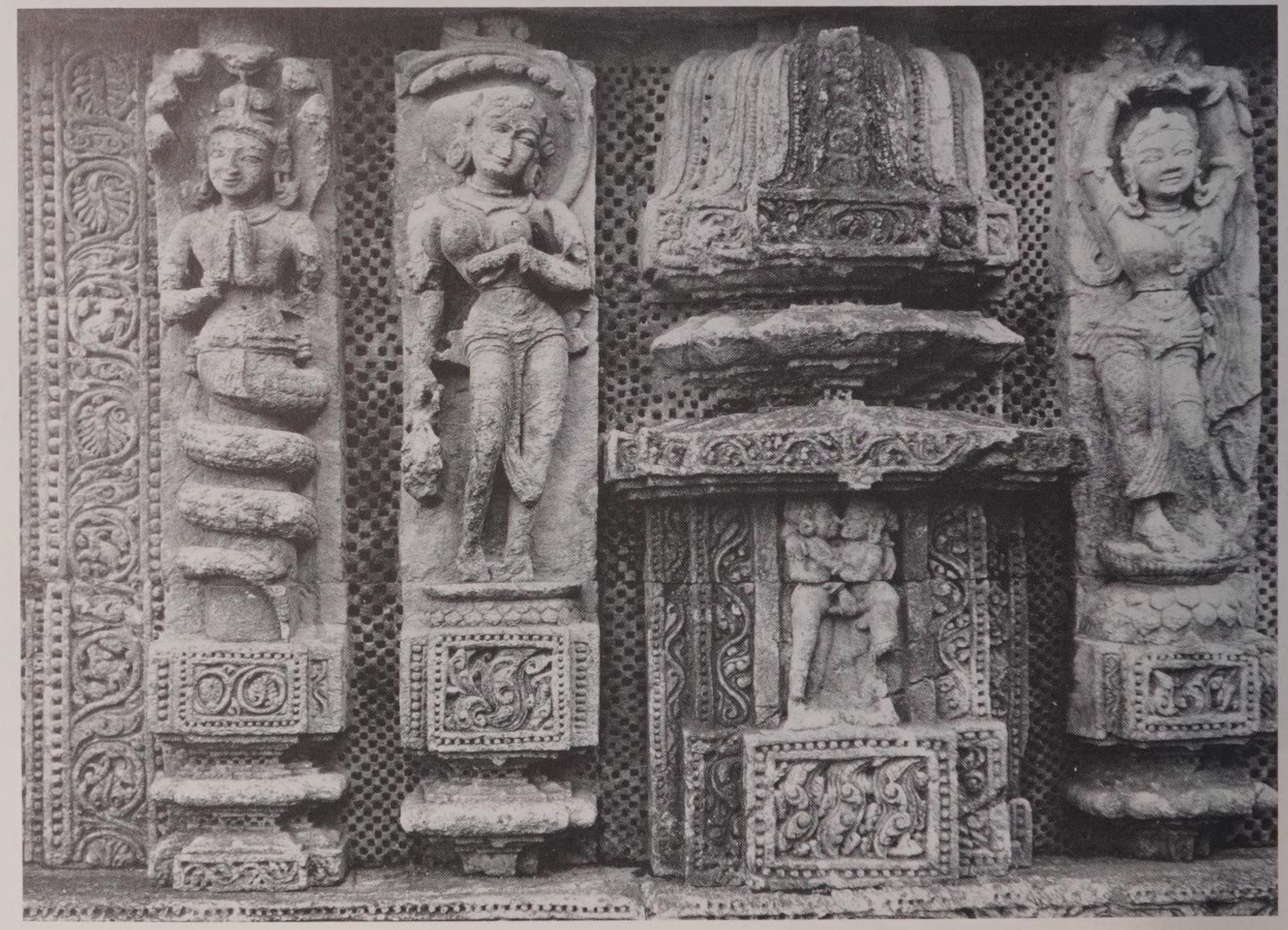


316. Sun Temple, wheel detail



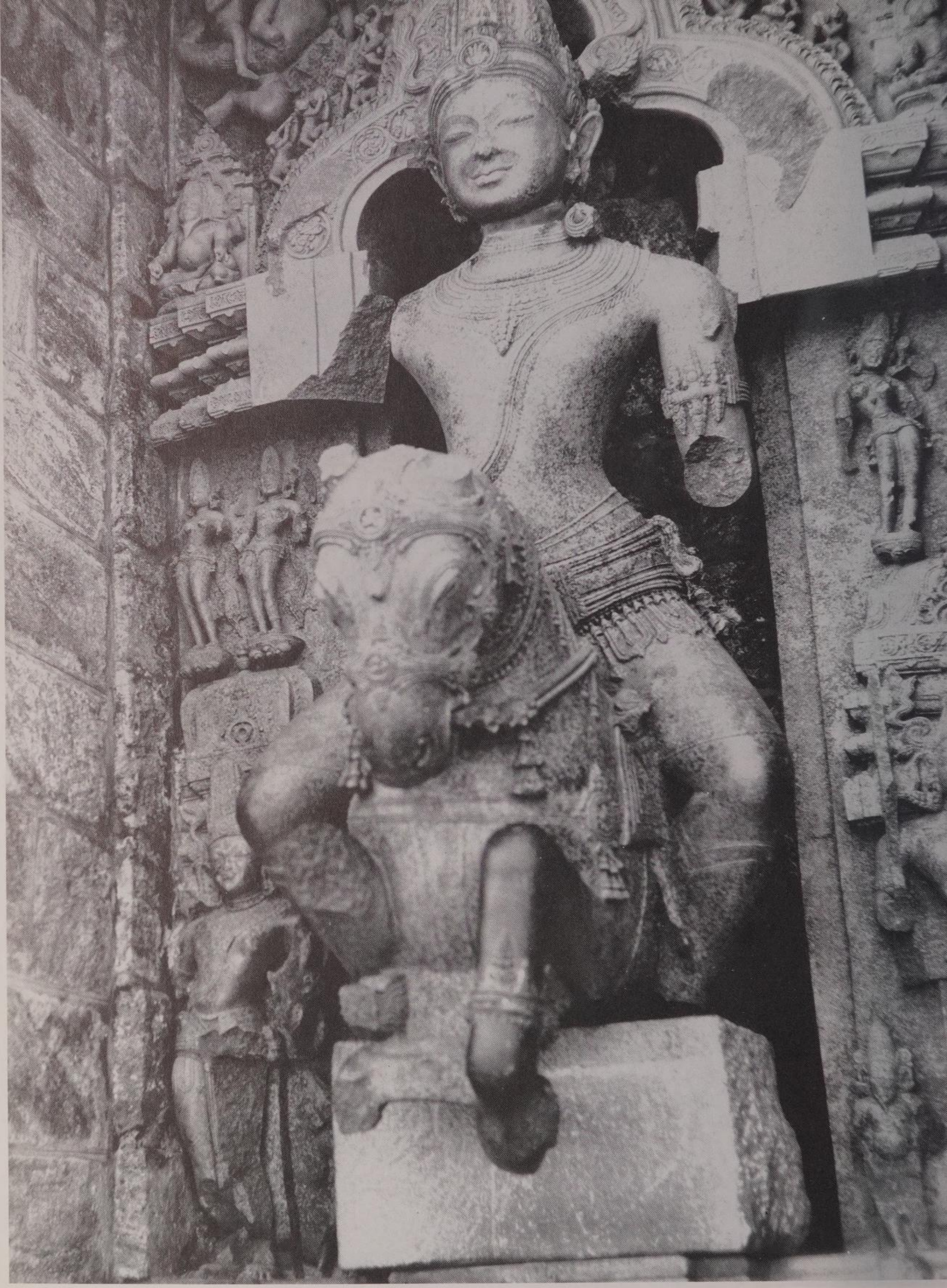
317. Sun Temple, wheel detail

318. Sun Temple, wall detail

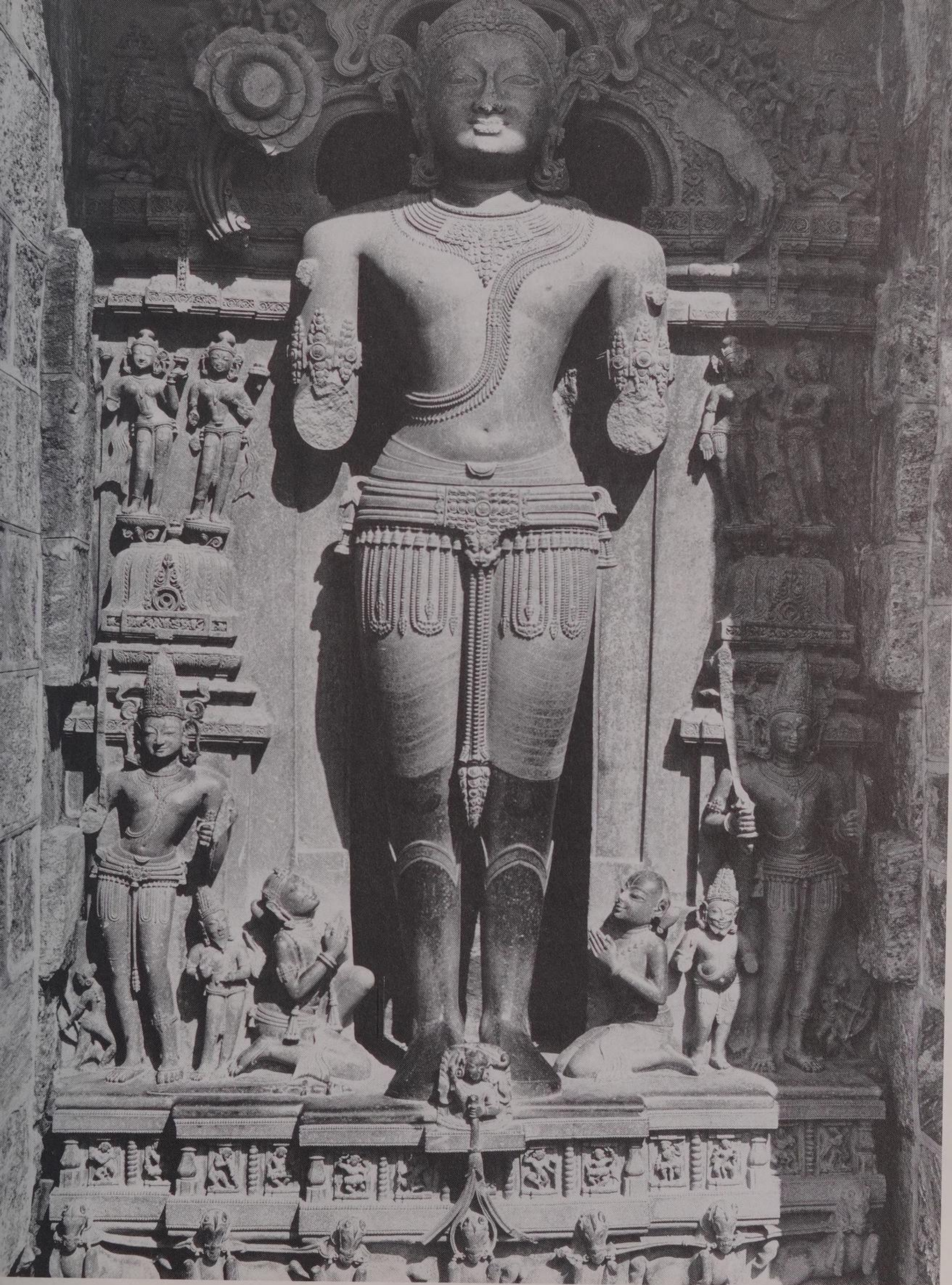


319. Sun Temple, wall detail

320. Sun Temple, wall detail



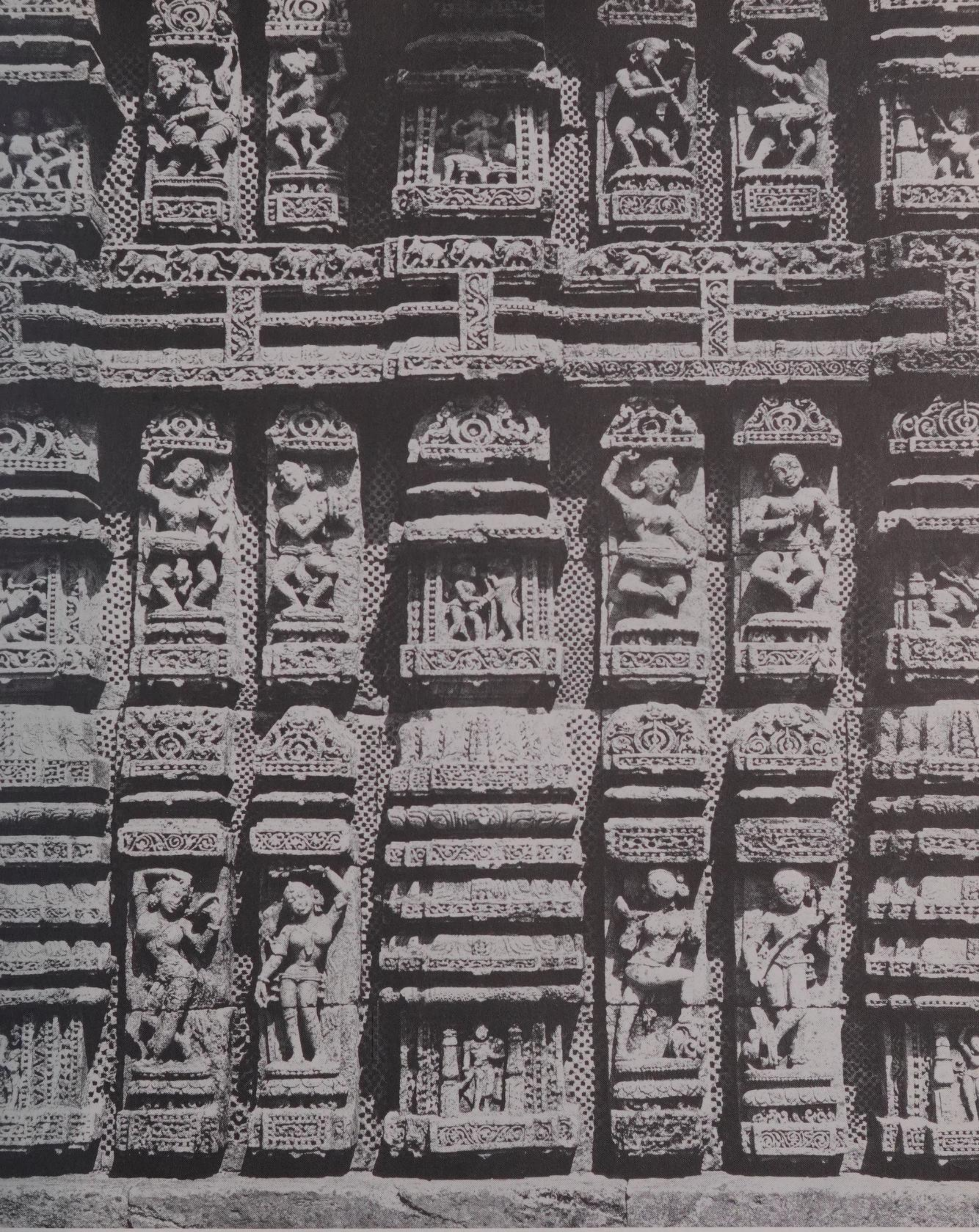
321. Sun Temple, detail of Sūrya



322. Sun Temple, detail of Sūrya

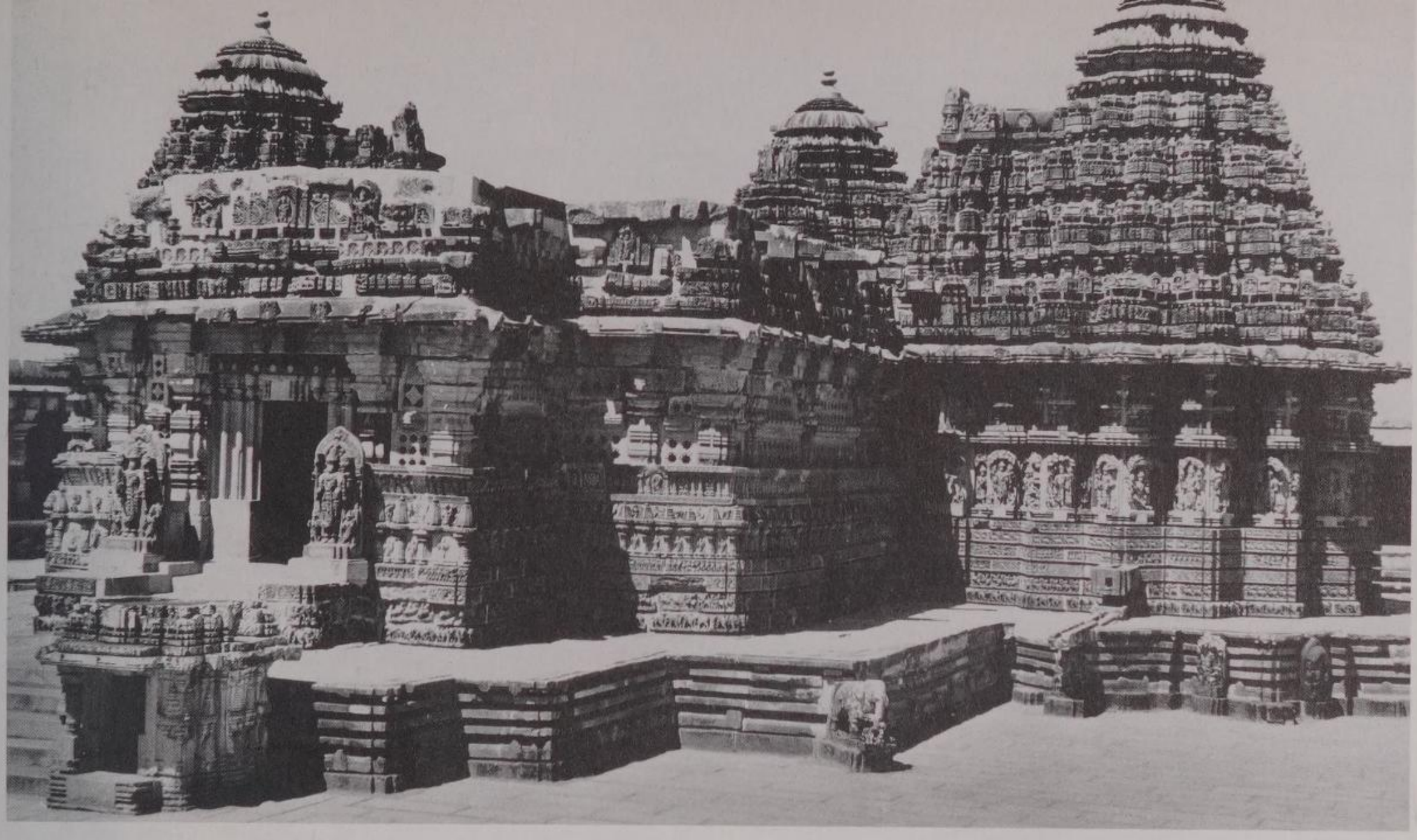
323. Sun Temple, Music and Dance Pavilion

324. Sun Temple, Music and Dance Pavilion, entrance detail



325. Sun Temple, Music and Dance Pavilion, base detail

326. Sun Temple, Music and Dance Pavilion, pillar detail

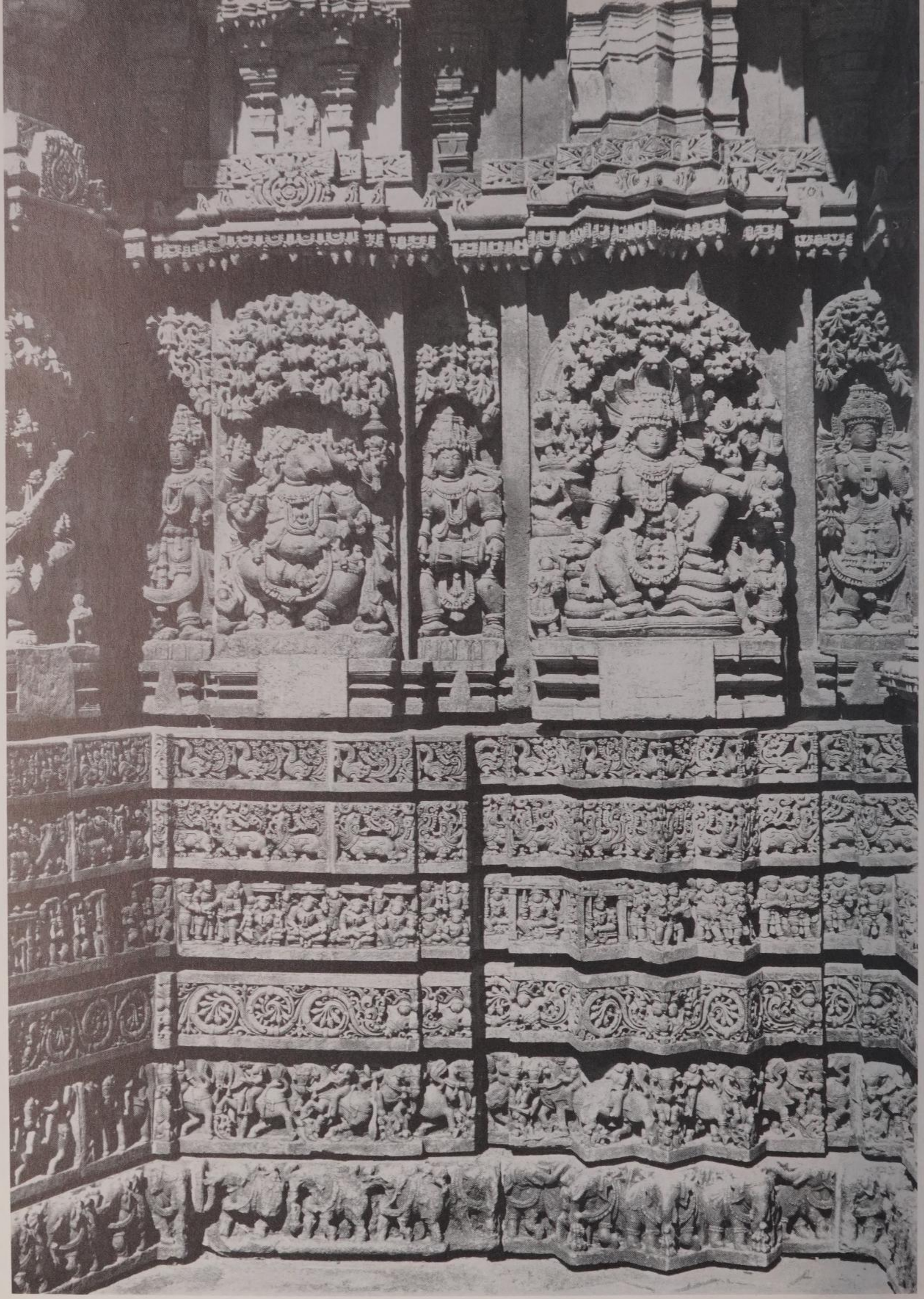


327. Keśava Temple, general view, Somnāthpur

328. Keśava Temple, tower detail

329. Keśava Temple, shrine detail

330. Keśava Temple, sidewall section



331. Keśava Temple, sidewall section

332. Keśava Temple, sidewall detail

333. Keśava Temple, sidewall detail

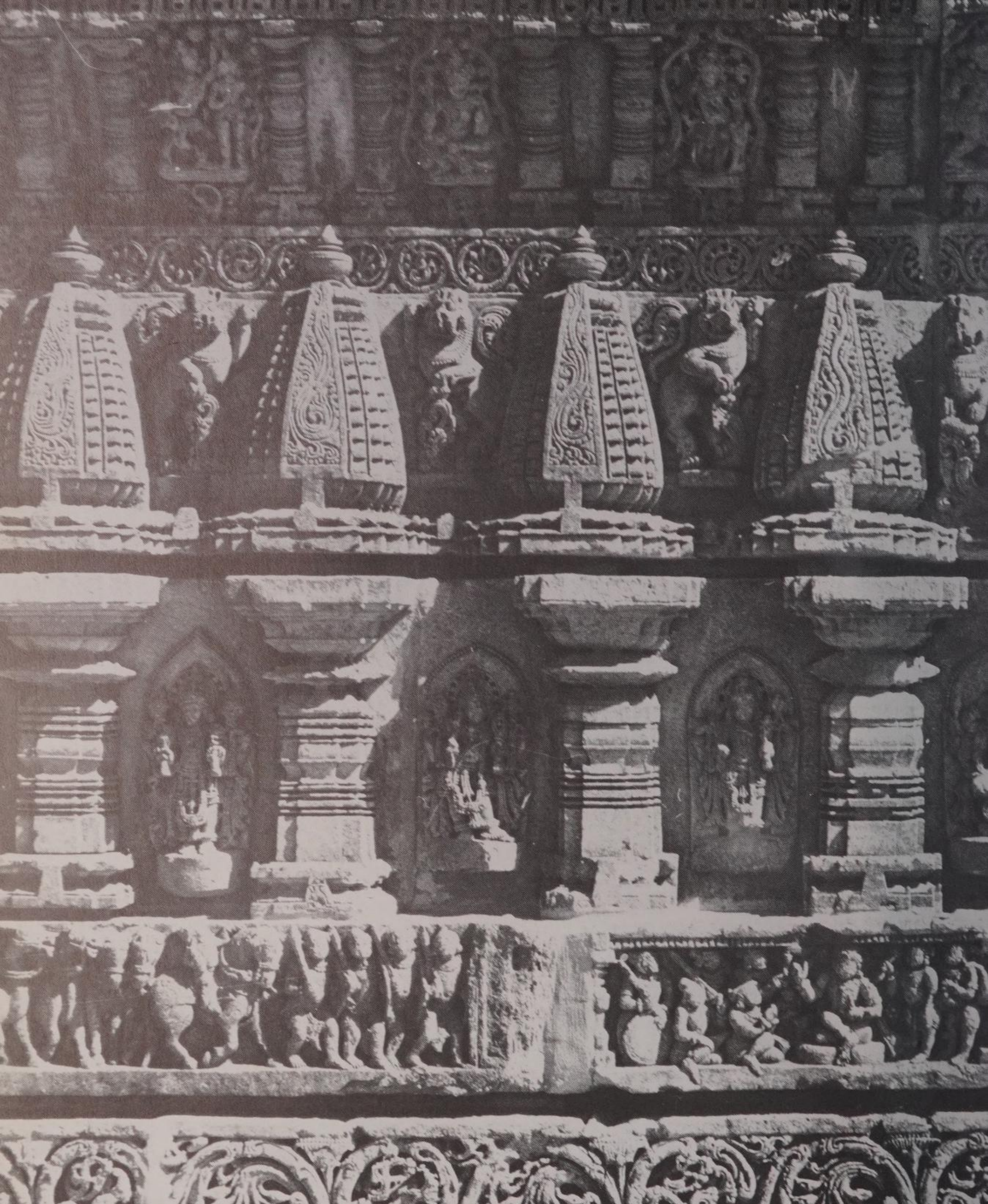
334. Keśava Temple, sidewall detail

335. Keśava Temple, frieze detail

336. Keśava Temple, frieze detail

337. Keśava Temple, frieze detail

338. Keśava Temple, frieze detail



339. Keśava Temple, wall detail

340. Keśava Temple, Vishnu detail

341. Keśava Temple, seated Vishnu

342. Keśava Temple, detail

6
Late South Indian Architecture

WITH THE DECLINING YEARS OF THE CHOLA DYNASTY CAME A NEW EMPHASIS IN DRAVIDIAN ARCHITECTURE. This new development minimized the sanctuary and glorified the temple compound. Since in South India a sacred shrine was seldom altered or abandoned, and since this was also a time of an expanding Hindu ritual that required new assembly halls, subordinate shrines, religious bathing pools, and various other structures, the logical solution was to enlarge the temple area. In order to make space available for such buildings, more land was enclosed with new walls marked by elaborate gate towers (gopurams). Under the Pāṇḍya dynasty (c. 1250–1350) the gopuram became the dominant architectural feature of the temple compound, sometimes soaring as high as 170 feet and completely dwarfing the main shrine and other structures. These great gate towers usually have a rectangular stone base two stories high with the entrance on the long side. Above this stone base is a lighter-weight structure made of brick, wood, and plaster.

Kāñchīpuram

343. Ekambareśvara Temple, gopuram, Kāñchīpuram (c. thirteenth century)
The Ekambareśvara Temple is particularly interesting because the period represented by the buildings within its compound is quite long, approximately one thousand years. This Pāṇḍya gopuram is one of the most striking buildings at Kāñchīpuram.

344–45. Ekambareśvara Temple, tower and detail
The great pyramidal tower, rising majestically from its two-storied base, culminates in a barrel-vaulted roof with "peacock tails" at either end. The structure has a dignity and grandeur that is often lost in later styles.

346. Varadarāja Temple, gopuram, Kāñchīpuram (fifteenth century)
The Varadarāja gopuram, although a seven-storied structure, is not as spectacular as the gate shown in plate 344. It is, however, well proportioned and impressive. The tower is of the Pāṇḍya design: its straight, sloping sides form a simple pyramid.

347–48. Varadarāja Temple, maṇḍapa details
In the middle of the fifteenth century, architecture took on a new emphasis that was inspired by the vigorous Vijayanagar dynasty (fifteenth through sixteenth centuries), one that dominated the political and cultural life of South India for two hundred years. Architectural interest changed from the towering gopuram structures to great pillared halls with large numbers of ornately carved columns. The columns were ornamented with riders on rearing horses or grotesque animals, an architectural ornament of pure fantasy suggesting a comparison with European medieval art. Although the grotesque and fanciful character of the pillars is more intricate than one might expect to find carved in stone, the sculpture retains its stone character. In some cases it may be a tortured stone, but at least it is not now coated with plaster and the surface quality lost. It is the work of a vigorous and imaginative people whose culture was somewhat similar to that of the age of chivalry in the West. Vijayanagar, their capital city, was located in a rocky wilderness on the banks of the Tungabadri River. The site, selected because of the favorable military position, was dominated by great fantastic rock formations that may have had some influence on the

character of the ornament that evolved. (The light band of color on the base of the columns in these two plates is a coat of whitewash that unfortunately does not enhance the building.)

349–52. Varadarāja Temple, pillar details

During the Vijayanagar dynasty the simple rampant lion pillars of the Pallavas reached their final fantastic form. The pillar detail of plate 349 has a rampant animal on each of its four corners—two horses and two fantastic monsters. Beneath the roof overhang is a link chain carved from stone. Perhaps the reader may consider all this prolific carving a tour de force, but it may have been the product of a people with an urgent desire to preserve the last great stronghold of Hinduism.

The exuberant quality of the carving is evident in plates 350–51. The great bird on which the rider is mounted is handsomely conceived and completely convincing. In plate 351 the structural elements, although richly ornamented, seem rugged and strong.

Perhaps the pillar detail of plate 352 indicates why the Vijayanagar dynasty is called India's age of chivalry. The rearing horse, the rider with his lance, and the foot soldier with his sword all suggest the atmosphere and pageantry of a medieval joust. The horse and his trappings and the soldiers with their mail-like uniforms seem to belong to a Europe when knighthood was in flower. The illusion is short-lived, however, as one notes the female figure on the adjacent side of the pillar. Beautiful though she is, she is not a lady of medieval Europe. The pillar is a beautifully organized composition that makes good use of the tactile quality of the stone.

353. Ekambareśvara Temple, gopuram detail, Kāñchīpuram (post-1565)

The fall of Vijayanagar in 1565 brought about a change in architectural style that was actually a revival and continuation of the earlier Pāṇḍya style. This final phase was the work of the Nāyak dynasty whose capital city, Madura, set the style that has more or less survived in South India into modern times. The Madura-style temple was one in which the compound grew to the point of becoming a small city. The boundary walls enclosed an ever-larger area, and on each of the four sides were great towering gopurams. These huge gate towers were similar to the Pāṇḍya gopurams, except for their slight concave curve as they soared upward, and instead of rising in stories marked by architectural units, they were often so covered with plaster images that the architectural elements were lost. The reader will undoubtedly agree that the ornament shown in this plate has little aesthetic value and seems almost repulsive, suggesting an unruly growth. It is difficult to realize that the canons of a religion that produced the grandeur of a Khajurāho also gave birth to the overripe decadence seen here.[17]

354. Ekambareśvara Temple, detail

The direction sculpture was to take is indicated by this plate. The basic forms were covered with plaster, which was easy to mold, and sculpture soon took on the characteristics of wedding-cake ornament. Every available area was covered with decoration. In the arch are Vishnu and his consort, Lakshmi. The figure to the right is Garuḍa (man-bird), vehicle of Vishnu, and on the left is Matsya (Vishnu's fish incarnation).

Madura

355. Tirupparankundram Temple, gopuram, Madura area (post-1565)

About five miles from Madura is a small shrine that backs into the base of a huge mountain of rock. At the top of the hill behind the temple is the tomb of a Muslim saint, which makes this also a place of Mohammedan pilgrimage. The tower rises in courses, but the uninspired figurative sculpture does not enhance the building.

356–57. Tirupparankundram Temple, pillar details

The few post-1565 plates shown here do not add to the aesthetic stature of India's architectural ornament, but indicate what may happen when a culture becomes totally engrossed with the repetitive mass-production of icons. These two pillars, renovated and painted in the mid-1960s, seem like hollow imitations of a once-great tradition.

358–59. Mīnāksī Temple, general views, Madura (seventeenth century)

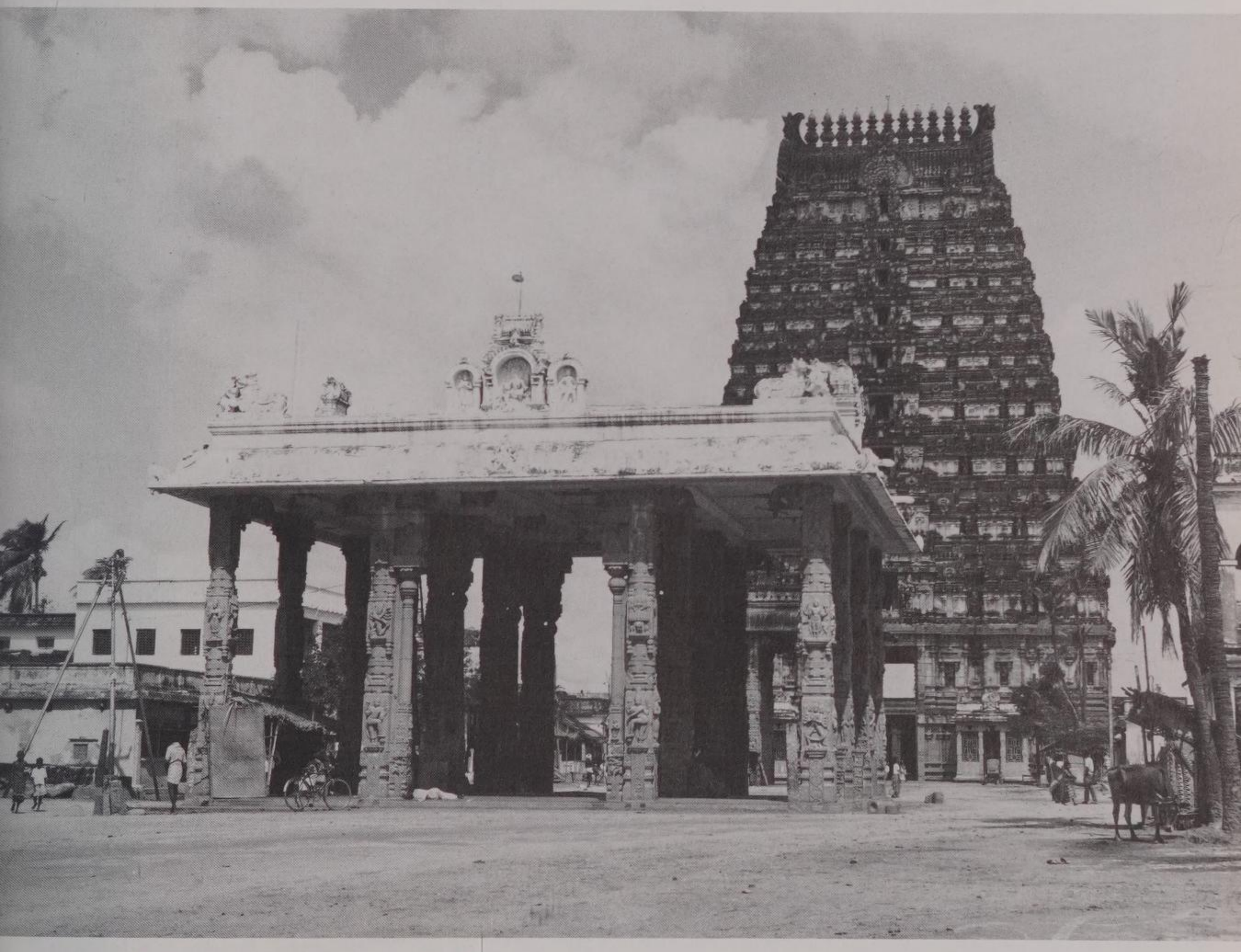
The growth of the temple compound—walls inside walls, religious tanks, pavilions, and great gate towers—shows clearly in these two plates.

360. Mīnāksī Temple, gopuram

One of the best illustrations of the great Nāyak gate towers is this gopuram of the Temple of the Goddess Mīnāksī. The upward concave sweep of the tower is clearly evident, and the dominant element marking the horizontal stories is rows of figures rather than the pilaster-entablature combination of earlier work.

361–62. Mīnāksī Temple, pillar details, maṇḍapa

The great dark pillared halls of this Madura temple-complex seem especially gloomy. There are over two thousand ornately carved pillars at this site. Generally the stone is dark in color, and much of it looks as if oil had been rubbed into its surface. Impressive as the size of the Mīnāksī is, it contains no new architectural forms—only a ripening of earlier trends.



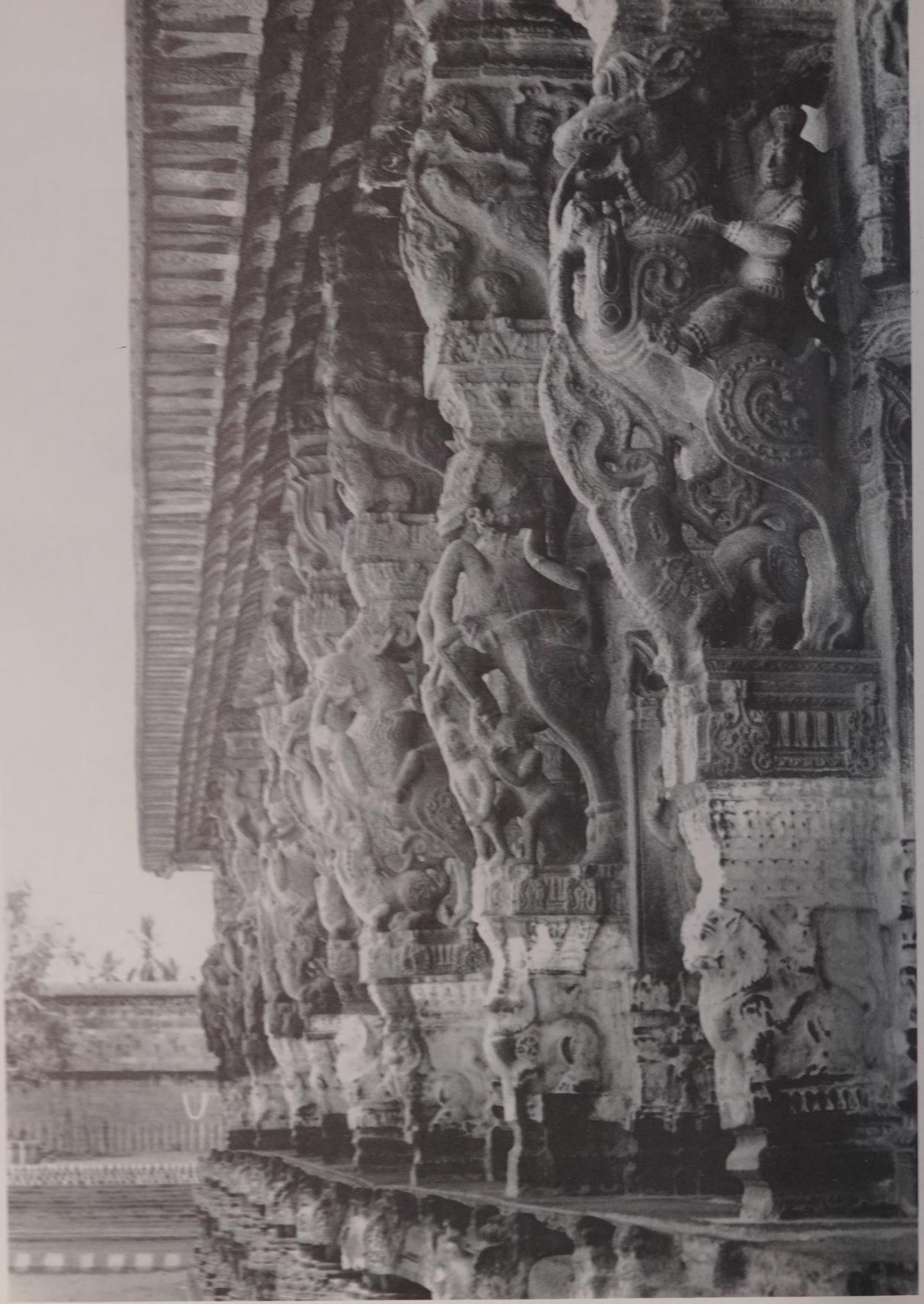
343. Ekambareśvara Temple, gopuram, Kāñchīpuram

344. Ekambareśvara Temple, tower detail

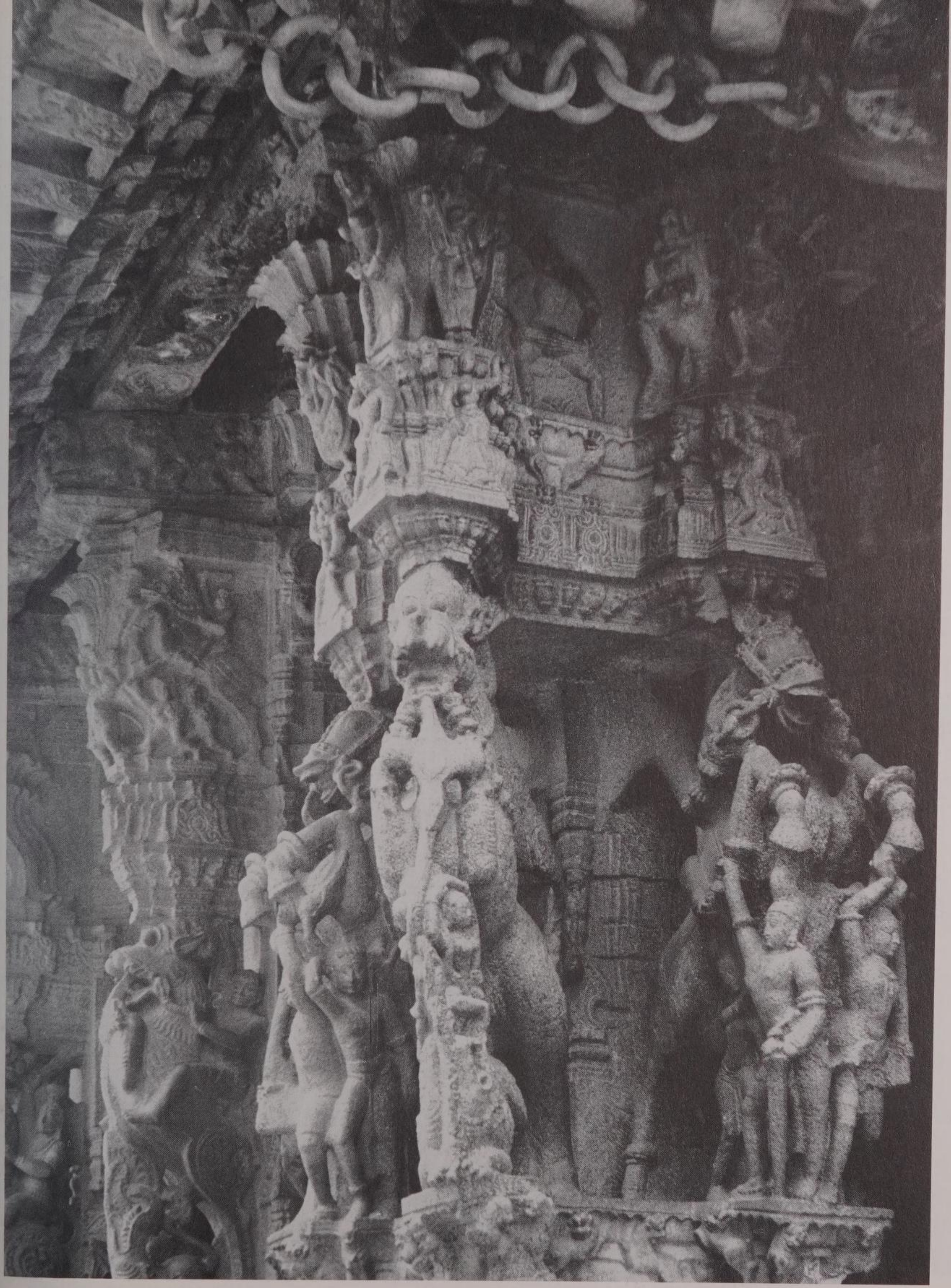
345. Ekambareśvara Temple, tower detail

346. Varadarāja Temple, gopuram, Kāñchīpuram

347. Varadarāja Temple, maṇḍapa detail



348. Varadarāja Temple, maṇḍapa detail



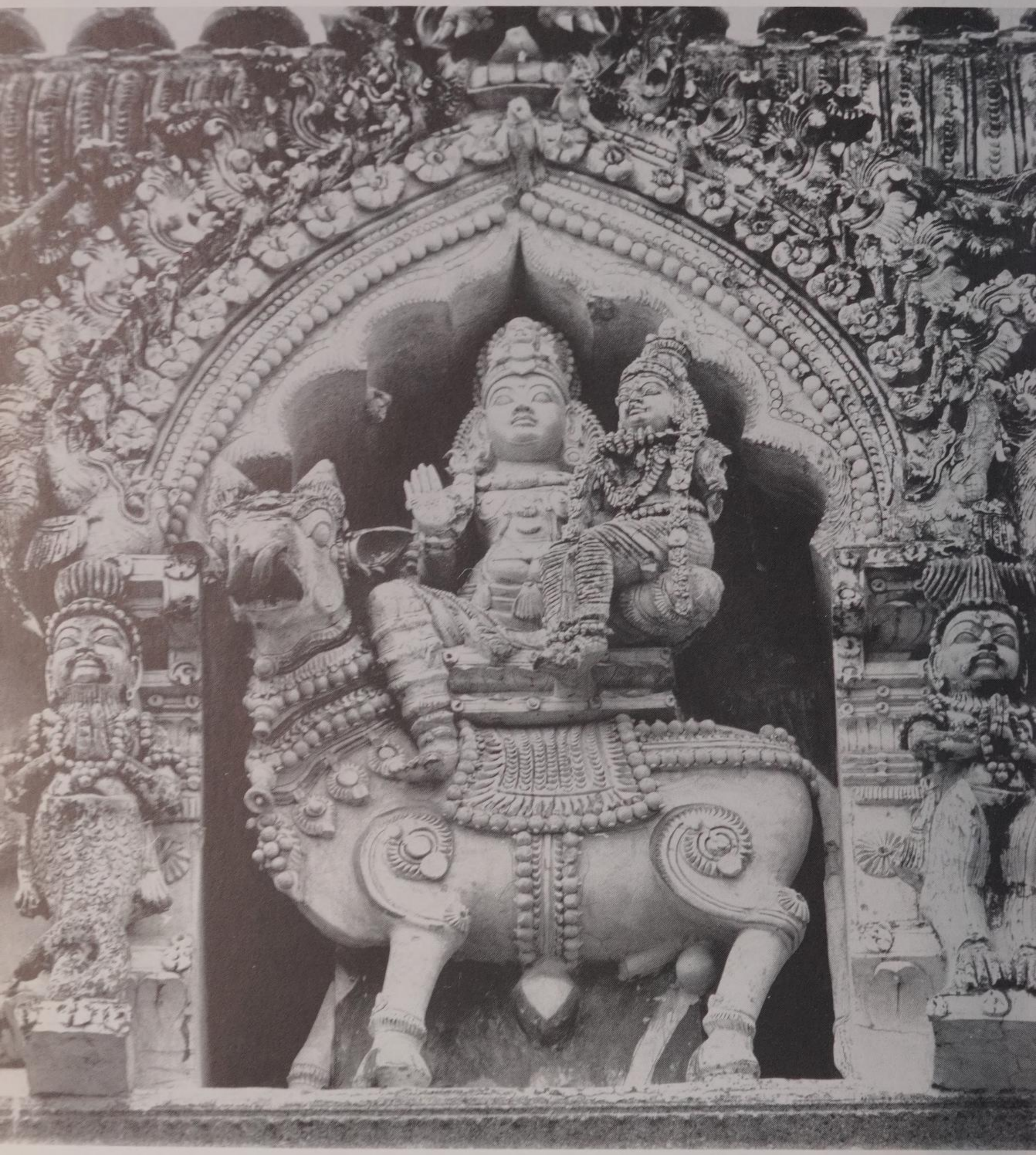
349. Varadarāja Temple, pillar detail

350. Varadarāja Temple, pillar detail

351. Varadarāja Temple, pillar detail

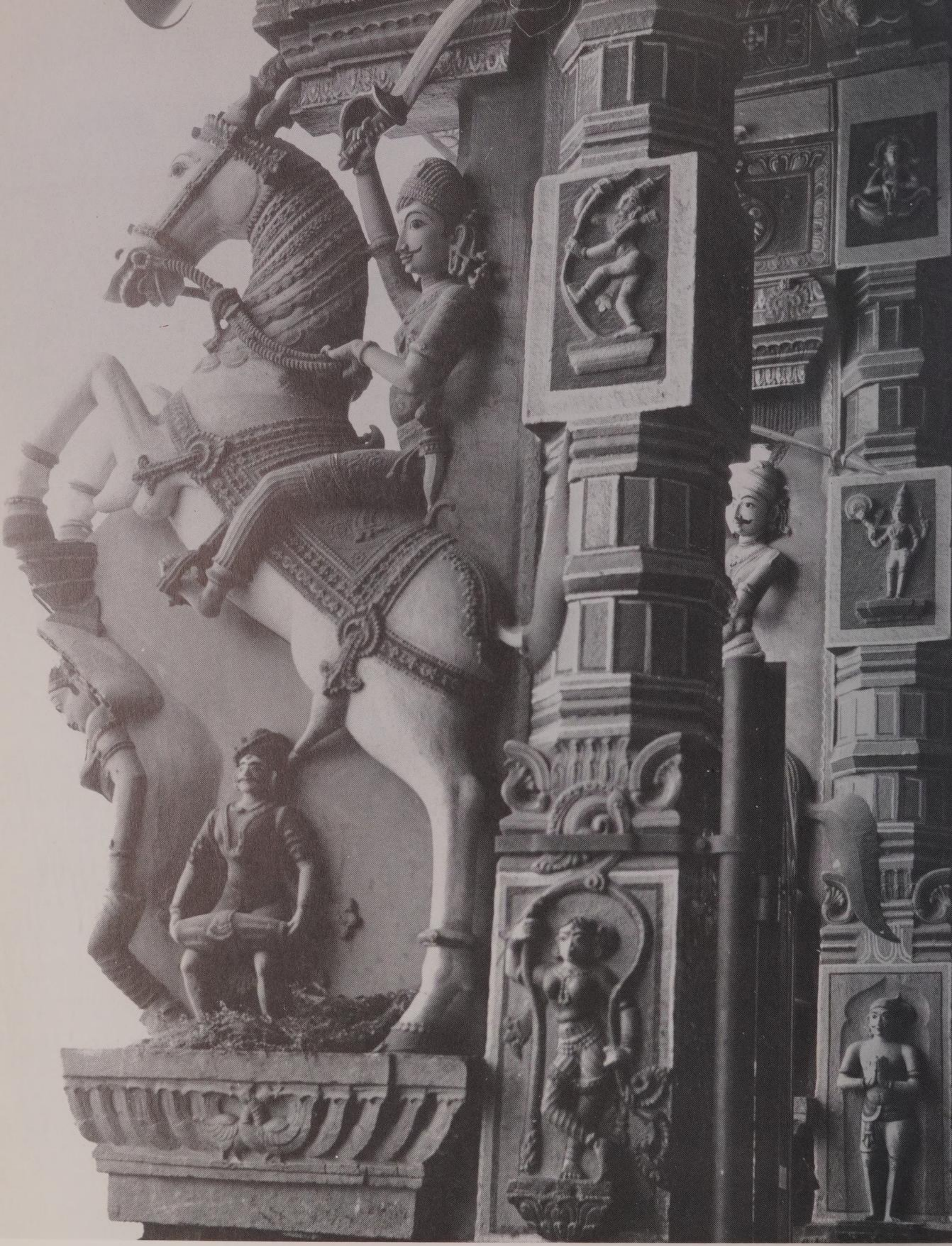
352. Varadarāja Temple, pillar detail

353. Ekambareśvara Temple, gopuram detail



354. Ekambareśvara Temple, detail

355. Tirupparankundram Temple, gopuram, Madura area



356. Tirupparankundram Temple, pillar detail

357. Tirupparankundram Temple, pillar detail

358. Mīnāksī Temple, general view, Madura

359. Mīnāksī Temple, general view, Madura

360. Mīnāksī Temple, gopuram

361. Mīnāksī Temple, pillar detail

362. Mīnāksī Temple, pillar detail

7
Hindu Shrines under Muslim Rule

THE LAST HINDU ARCHITECTURE TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS VOLUME IS FROM BRINDĀBAN, A SMALL town near Mathurā that is famous as the home of Krishna. According to Hindu mythology, Krishna, the eighth avatar of Vishnu, was born and brought up among the pastoral people of Brindāban. Early in the sixteenth century there was a widespread revival of the Krishna cult, which led to temple-building activity. The five temples in Brindāban were built during a period that roughly coincides with the reign of Akbar (1556–1605). The invading Muslims had destroyed most of the great Indian temples of the north and none had been built since Mohammedan rule had become established. However, Akbar, famous for his tolerance, permitted the Hindu temples of Brindāban to be built by the patronage of friendly Hindu princes.[1]

Perhaps the first point to note about these buildings is their complete lack of figurative ornament, undoubtedly the result of Islam's strict prohibition of imagery. Some may believe that other periods of Indian architecture might have been improved with similar restrictions, but the Brindāban temples show such marked restraint that they almost seem to negate everything associated with the great periods of Indian architecture.

Brindāban

363. Gobind Devi Temple, Brindāban (late sixteenth–early seventeenth century)

The Gobind Devi is structurally interesting because it is one of the rare Indian temples that uses a true arch in its construction. What is left of the building today is the entrance and maṇḍapa, the shrine room and its tower having been destroyed by Aurangzeb, the great grandson of Akbar. Gobind Devi was built by the patronage of the great Hindu prince Man Singh of Jaipur and is strikingly similar to Sās-Bahu Temple. When Aurangzeb came to power he destroyed the shrine room and transformed the maṇḍapa into a mosque.

364. Gobind Devi Temple, entrance detail

Today Gobind Devi Temple is surrounded by other buildings, making it almost impossible to photograph from a distance. This plate shows the large entrance on the south side.

365. Gobind Devi Temple, detail of plate 364

The bracketed corners of the door jambs repeat the forms used in the brackets supporting the overhang. The wide overhang and pendant bracket, long used in Indian architecture, were also adopted by the Muslim builders. The ornament on the underside of the overhang is a simple alternating circle and diamond pattern.

366. Gobind Devi Temple, façade detail

To the right of the entrance shown in plate 364 is this smaller door. The stylized trefoil that is used for ornament is relatively small and from a distance seems like beading. The rich floral decorative design of earlier periods is totally missing.

367. Gobind Devi Temple, detail

The wide overhanging eaves and heavy brackets, both important elements of earlier Indian architecture, are much in evidence at Brindāban. This plate particularly emphasizes the strong dark-and-light patterns that result from recessing.

368. Gopi Nath Temple, Brindāban (late sixteenth–early seventeenth century)

Gopi Nath, a much smaller temple than Gobind Devi, is similar in its type of ornament. The roof form shows the influence of the Muslim dome.

369. Gopi Nath Temple, detail

This detail emphasizes the play of dark-and-light patterning that results from the recessing and offsetting. The Indian architect has always been aware of the use of brilliant light and shadow, but in these buildings the play of dark and light almost becomes ornament in itself.

370. Gopi Nath Temple, bracket detail

The lotus design is one of India's oldest ornamental devices, going back to the earliest existing architecture. On Gopi Nath the lotus is used in one of its simpler forms, and here it appears between the brackets supporting the overhang.

371. Gopi Nath Temple, trefoil detail

This plate shows a beautiful composition of horizontal and vertical lines. Much of what appears as beading from a distance is a trefoil design. In some areas a single trefoil is used, and in other areas a reciprocal trefoil; in both cases they soften the angularity of the composition.

372. Gopi Nath Temple, bracket detail

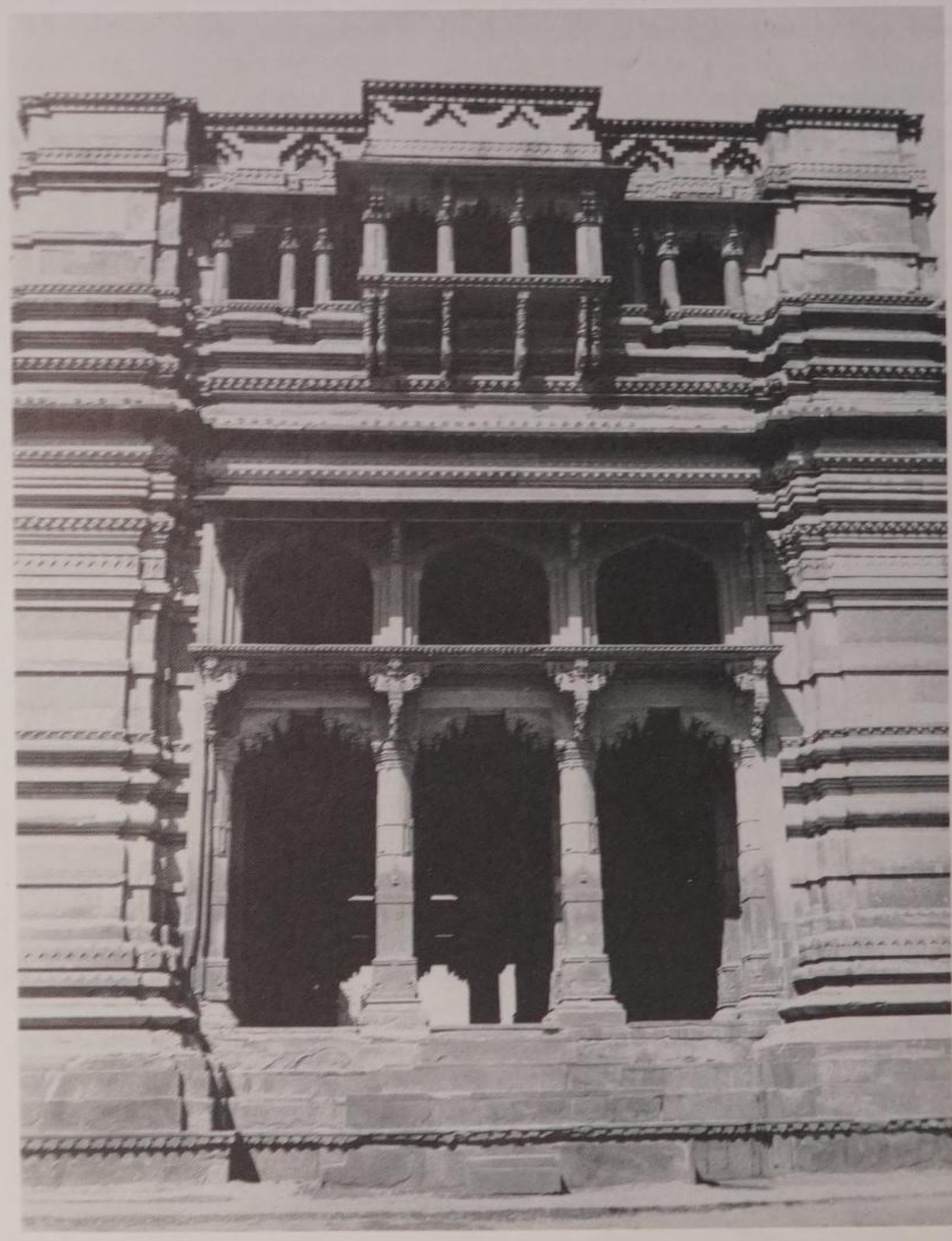
The bracket design shown in this plate is very similar to that used in some of the Fatehpur-Sīkrī buildings that were built by Akbar at about the same time.

373. Madan Mohan Temple, śikhara, Brindāban (late sixteenth–early seventeenth century)

Although this handsome tower is not large (sixty-five feet high), it gives an impression of considerable height because of its structural design. It rises from an octagonal base and tapers into a tall conical tower with broad vertical bands of molding separating each angle. Horizontal bands circle the tower at intervals so that the total effect is one of receding rectangular panels. At the top is a finial in the form of a disk whose outer edge is ornamented by a series of spherical forms. These forms are also used in the design that divides the tower horizontally. This type of śikhara is unique in India.

374. Madan Mohan Temple, detail of plate 373

363. Gobind Devi Temple, Brindāban

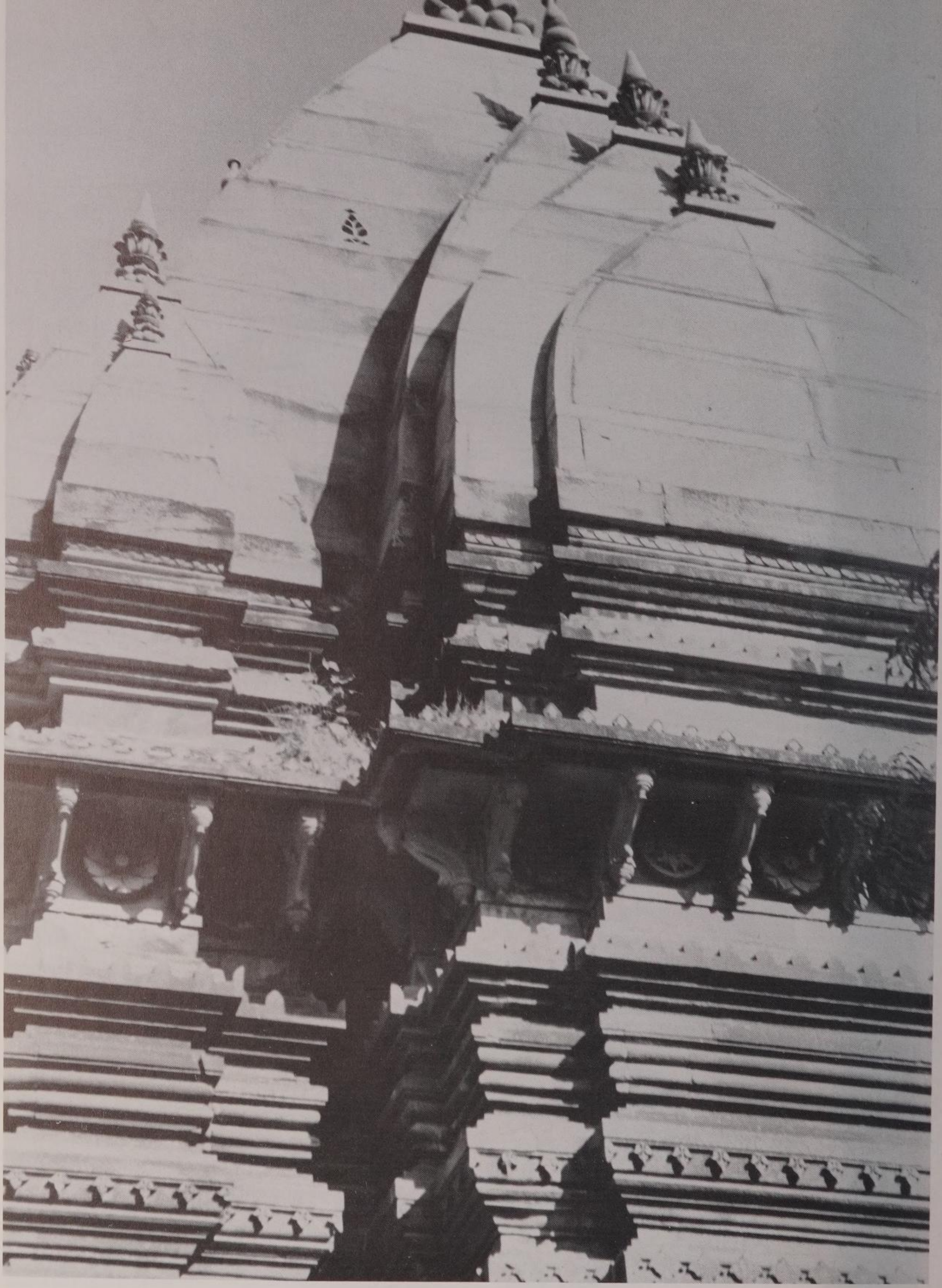


364. Gobind Devi Temple, entrance detail

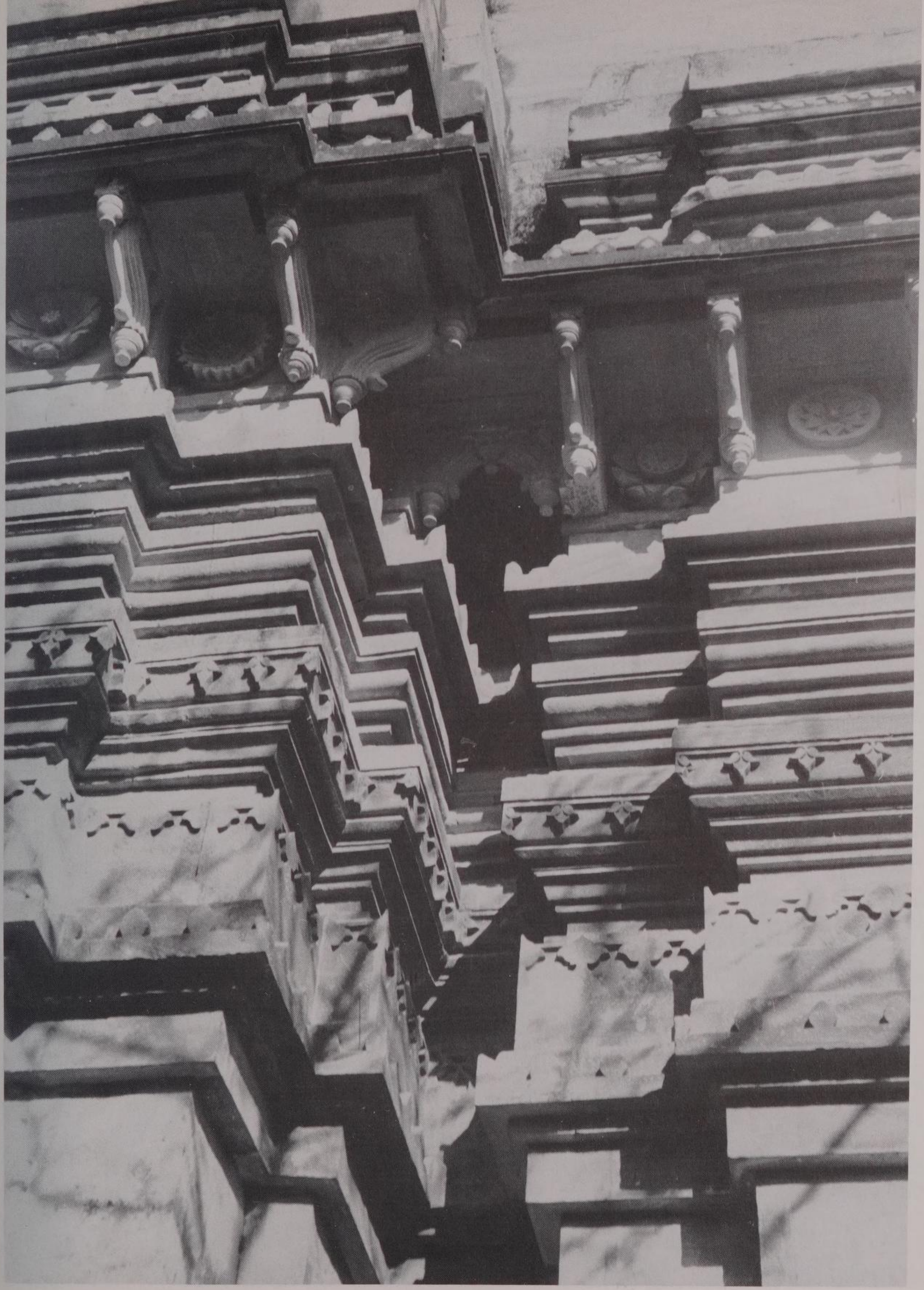
365. Gobind Devi Temple, detail of plate 364

366. Gobind Devi Temple, façade detail

367. Gobind Devi Temple, detail

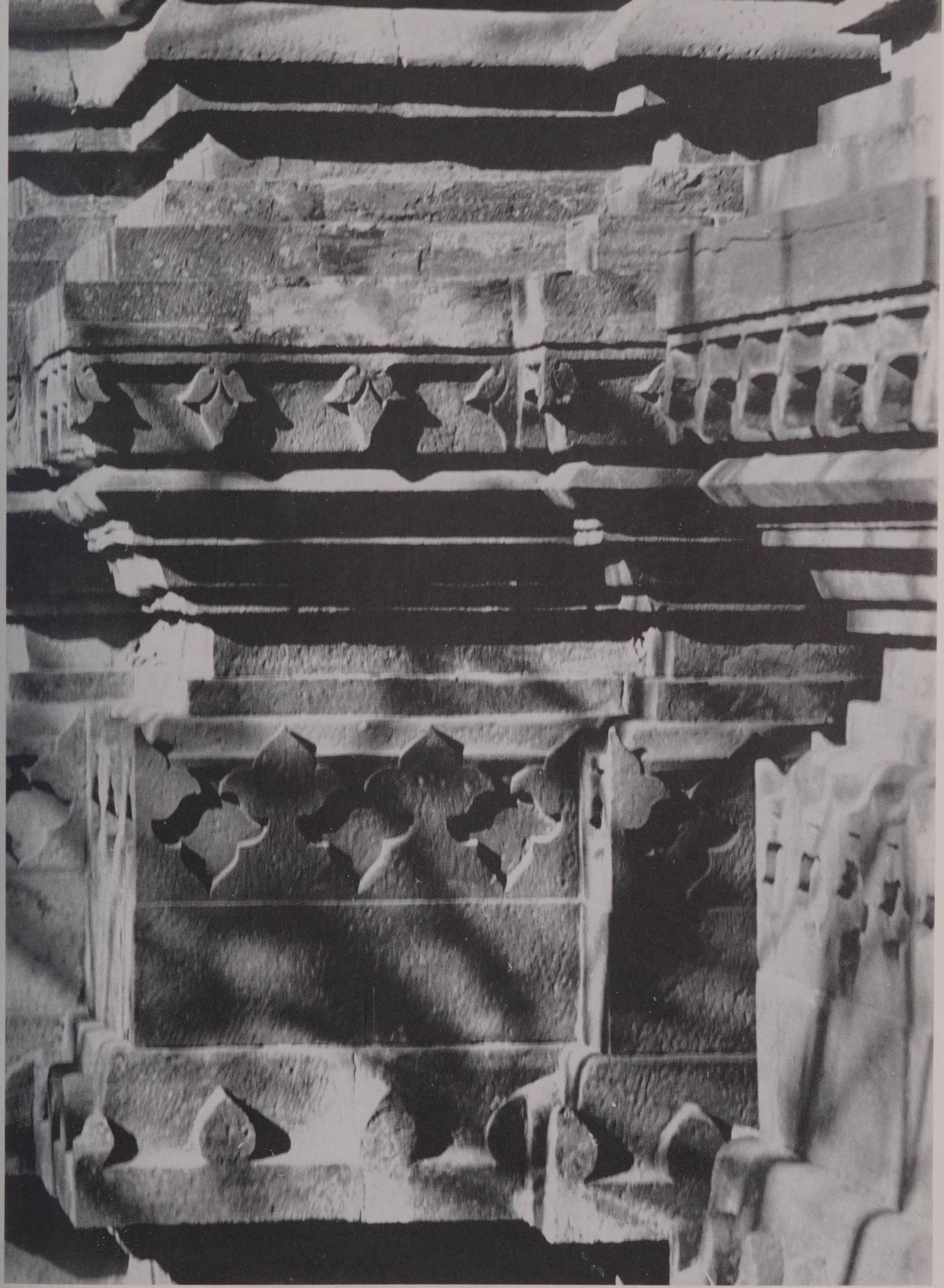


368. Gopi Nath Temple, Brindāban



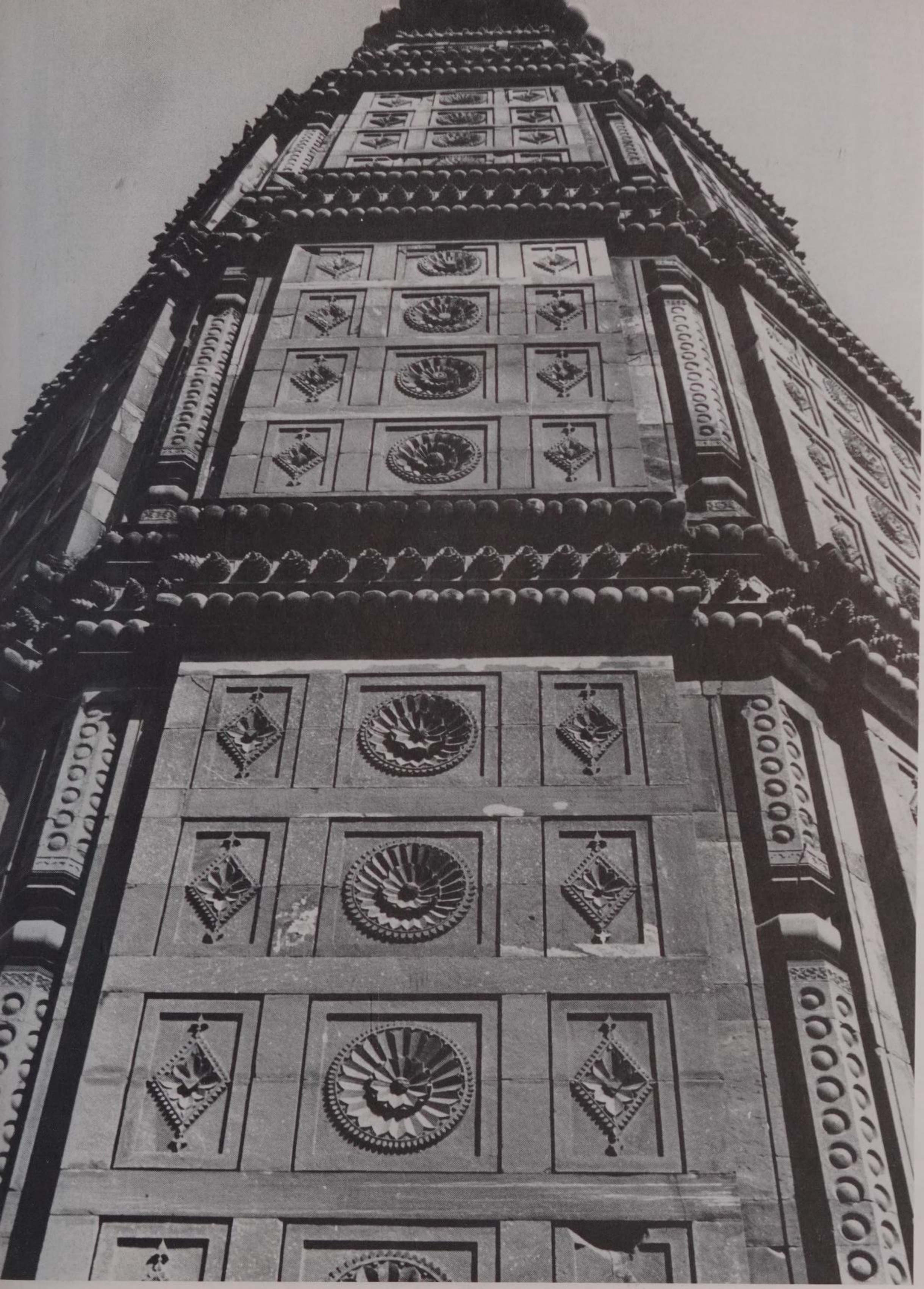
369. Gopi Nath Temple, detail

370. Gopi Nath Temple, bracket detail

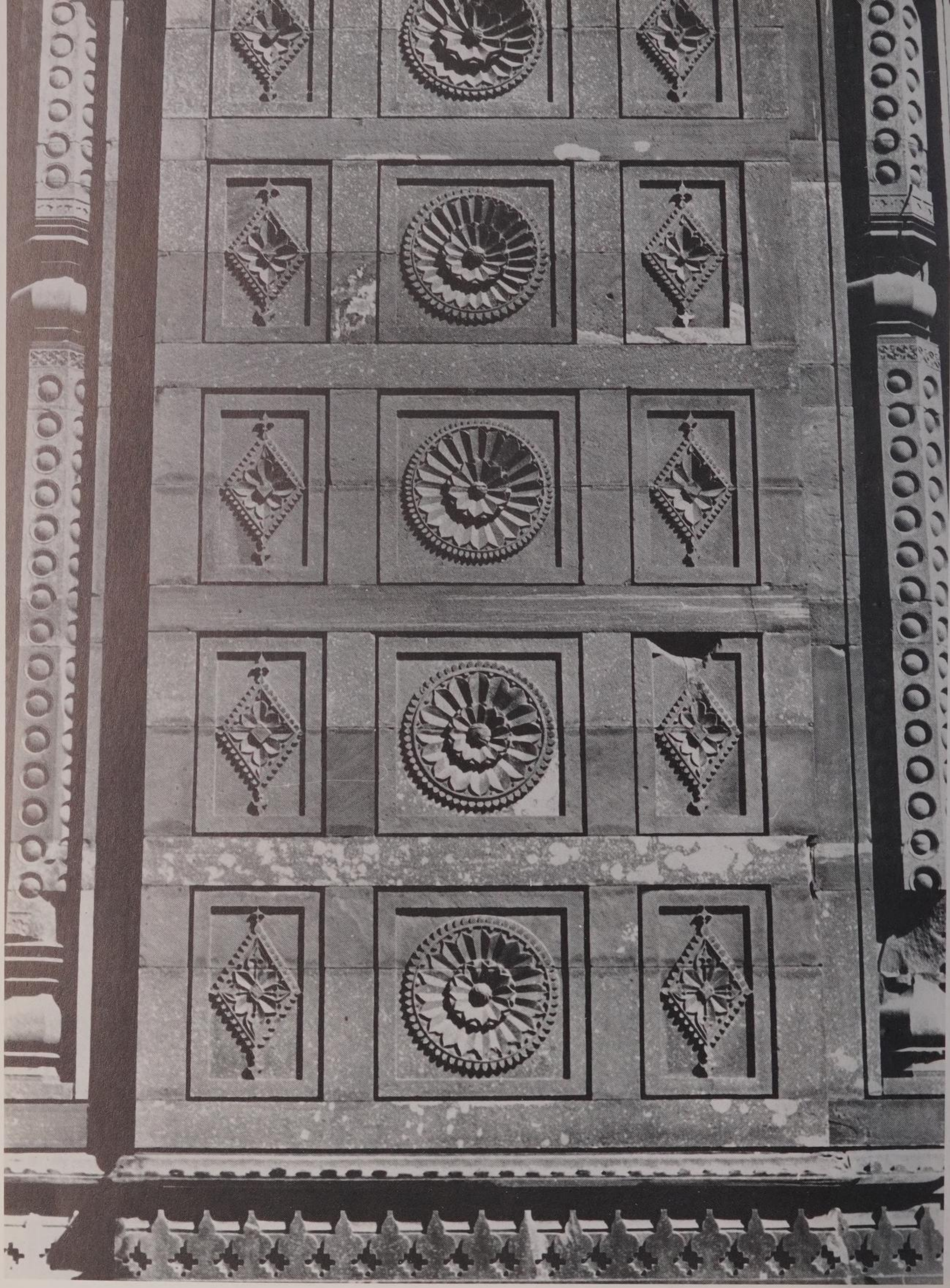


371. Gopi Nath Temple, trefoil detail

372. Gopi Nath Temple, bracket detail



373. Śikhara, Madan Mohan Temple, Brindāban



374. Madan Mohan Temple, detail of plate 373

8
Indo-Muslim Architecture

THE MUSLIM CONQUEST OF INDIA WAS NOT A SINGLE CONCERTED EFFORT BUT ONE THAT SPREAD over several centuries. India's first conflict with the Arab world was early in the eighth century (712) when an expedition under Muhammed bin Kāsim caused the fall of Multan and Sind became a Mohammedan province. However, it was not until the end of the tenth century and the early part of the eleventh that northern India was subjected to devastating raids. Great religious centers were completely destroyed and untold wealth was taken from the country. A Turkish chieftain, Mahmūd of Ghazni, was the leader of seventeen raids over thirty years. Muslim records describe Mahmūd as a great missionary attempting to convert the infidel, but the facts appear otherwise. His main purpose seems to have been to return to Ghazni with large caravans of war plunder. With the death of Mahmūd in 1030, India had a period of about 150 years more or less free from foreign invaders.

It was not until the end of the twelfth century that the Muslims not only raided India but began to occupy it. Muhammed of Ghor successfully raided India, but he also left one of his generals, Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak, to occupy Delhi and secure the conquest. Another general drove further east and occupied Bihār and Bengal. The great university of Nālandā and its invaluable library were destroyed. The Buddhist monks who were not killed fled to Tibet, taking their religion with them, away from the land where it was born. By 1200 Muhammed of Ghor controlled much of North India, and when he was assassinated several years later, his general, Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak, a former slave, became the first sultan of Delhi.

In outlying districts such as Rājasthān, Hindu kingdoms continued to exist—sometimes under the domination of the Turkish sultans and sometimes completely independent. From this time until the eighteenth century, Muslim rulers controlled North India and gradually spread their conquests southward. The period of the great Hindu dynasties was ended.

Indo-Muslim architecture did not appear as a fully developed importation but was the result of a style that evolved over hundreds of years. During most of that time Delhi was the Muslims' capital city, and the court styles that developed there influenced provincial art, though it was not entirely a one-way process. The early Muslims in India were a very small ruling minority, and it was only natural that their architecture would reflect an indigenous Indian character, particularly since most of the craftsmen were Indians. Since the development of the Indo-Muslim style may best be seen in the Delhi-Agra area, examples of architecture are limited to these areas.

The Muslims, although united in their religion, came from different countries and different backgrounds. Their art was eclectic—a fusion of elements from the countries they had conquered—but the main foreign influence that Islam brought into India was Persian. It was primarily the combination of Indian and Persian elements that produced the Indo-Muslim architecture. Imported form must be absorbed and integrated by the host country if it is to develop into a significant architecture. Indo-Muslim architecture, a fusion of imported and indigenous forms and techniques, belongs to India, the land where it was developed.[1]

The earliest existing Indo-Muslim buildings are in Delhi. Islam's first building requirement was a mosque, and this was accomplished by dismantling Hindu temples and reassembling the stone in the form of a mosque, in the process removing figures carved by the Hindu idolators. However, by the end of the twelfth century the Muslim rulers were well enough established to quarry their own stone. A great arched screen of Muslim design was placed in front of the *līwān* (pillared cloister) of the Quwwatul-Islam mosque.

The design of a mosque *(masjid)*, determined by strict rules of the Islamic religion, consists of an open

courtyard *(sahn)* surrounded on three sides by a līwān, the fourth side, which faces Mecca (west in India), consisting of a pillared hall with one or more domes. The hall must be large and unpartitioned for congregational worship; the worshipers must be able to face the *mihrab* (a niche facing Mecca); there must be a pulpit for the use of the imam; and there must be water or a fountain for purification (usually in the courtyard). Although Islam does not require a dome on a mosque, it has been used since early times and has thus become an important element of the design. Since Islam prohibits the use of any figures, the ornament of the mosque consists of floral forms, geometric designs, and script from the Koran.

The design of a mosque is quite different from the dark, mysterious Indian temple with its deity in a chamber deep inside (womb house) where it is worshiped by a single devotee, its walls covered with multitudes of gods, demigods, and celestial beings. Islamic architecture is concerned with space, both two- and three-dimensional. The pillared hall is light and open with space flowing in from the courtyard. Two-dimensional space is continually emphasized by the use of inlaid design on a flat plane, and, on a larger-scale, by the carefully planned silhouette of a building against the sky. Islamic buildings seem to be apart from nature rather than *of* nature, their ornament stressing geometric and abstract form. Scholars have suggested that this may reflect the background of a desert people who see objects silhouetted against an endless sky and delicate mirages. It is indeed the exact opposite of Indian architecture, which suggests an organism growing from the ground into the sky.

Not only were Indian builders devoted to a tradition totally different from that of Islam, but their methods of construction were different. From a very early period they seemed to have mistrusted and avoided the arch because of their feeling that it lacked repose—that "the arch never sleeps."[2] Because of a preference for a post-and-beam type of construction, Indian builders did little experimenting with different building methods. As a result the structural arch is generally not found in indigenous architecture. When the Indian craftsman wished to form an arch he used a corbeled arch or dome. When the Muslims decided to add the great arched screen to the Quwwatul-Islam mosque, this was the method employed by the Indian builders. Two other types of structure particularly associated with Islamic architecture are the minaret or *minār,* the tower from which the faithful are called to prayer, and the tomb building. The most famous tower in India, the Qutb Minār, was built around 1200. The Muslim tomb, more or less a domed cube, may be a relatively small and simple structure or a magnificent mausoleum such as the Tāj Mahal.

The Indo-Muslim house was not very different from an Indian residence. It was usually built around an open court with galleries and verandas connecting the various parts. However, the men's and women's quarters were separate. A palace usually combined several courts with gardens, fountains, and water courses. Close by the palace was a private and a public audience chamber, where the ruling monarch met dignitaries and settled his subjects' grievances.

To these various types of buildings the Muslim brought the structural arch, the dome, geometric design, inlaid ornament, and script. India contributed colonnaded courtyards, balconies supported by brackets, wide overhanging eaves, floral decoration, and an organic quality inherent in all Indian design.

Whether Indo-Muslim architecture reached its peak under Akbar with his complete fusion of Indian and Islamic elements or under the brilliant and elegant marble creations of Shāh Jahān is a matter of individual opinion. Both periods achieved great architecture.

PRE-MOGHUL PERIOD: DELHI

Qutb Minār Area

375. Quwwatul-Islam Mosque, pillars, Delhi (c. 1193)

In this plate are Hindu pillars dating from the eighth or ninth century that might well have been included with other Hindu architecture but are placed here because they were reused as part of a twelfth-century Muslim mosque. Soon after Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak occupied Delhi he built the Quwwatul-Islam Mosque, taking the material from Hindu temples after removing the Hindu figures. These pillars are completely Indian in character and carved in the finest Indian style.

376–78. Quwwatul-Islam Mosque, arched screen details

A few years after the Quwwatul-Islam Mosque was built a new arched screen was added. Constructed of newly quarried stone, it is one of the earliest remaining examples of Indo-Muslim architecture. The

façade of corbeled arches is obviously the work of Indian craftsmen, and the shape of the ogee arch goes back to ancient Indian origins.[3] The screen is covered with handsome ornament, both Indian and Muslim. The decorative script from the Koran is Islamic and the graceful floral ornament Indian. The Indian craftsman has combined them into a unified composition.

Plate 378 is a detail of plate 377.

379. Quwwatul-Islam Mosque, screen extension detail

A device used in several of the early Indo-Muslim buildings is an elaborately ornamented engaged column. The ornament is not achieved through modeling but through a deeply incised pattern that produces a strong positive-negative composition. This plate also shows the tactile quality of the stone.

380. Qutb Minār, Delhi (early thirteenth century)

This great red sandstone victory tower and minaret was started in 1199 by Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak and finished by Iltutmish. The base is 46 feet in diameter and its 243-foot height may be climbed by 379 steps. The variation in the sandstone adds an interesting surface quality and the projecting balconies make an unusual silhouette, but undoubtedly the spectator is most impressed by the sheer size of the tower. The first story consists of alternating half-round and angular shapes, the second story uses only half-round forms, the third only angular shapes, and the two top sections (restorations following an earthquake) are without decoration.

381–82. Qutb Minār, details of tower

A close view of one of the projecting balconies reveals its unusual design. The balcony projections are supported and their weight transferred to the body of the tower by a system of bracketing. This produces an unusual type of ornament as well as an unusual structural system.[4] The great height and unusual silhouette of the Qutb Minār are impressive, but it has other interesting elements as well. The combination of ornamented and plain sandstone, the changing of the tower's contour at each balcony level, and the rich variations in the dark-light of the red sandstone all work together to produce a handsome structure.

On each of the first three stories two horizontal bands or ornament are placed between the projecting balconies. Plate 382 shows a small section from the lowest level. The Indian artisan has beautifully organized the Islamic script with his indigenous ornament.

383. Tomb of Iltutmish, exterior detail, Delhi (c. 1235)

This plate introduces a new type of structure that the Muslims brought into India—the monumental tomb. Situated beside the Quwwatul-Islam Mosque, this tomb bears no inscription but is generally identified as the tomb of Iltutmish. The outside walls are relatively plain (except around the three arched doorways), and the interior walls are richly ornamented. This may indicate that the exterior was never completed.

384–85. Tomb of Iltutmish, interior details

The interior walls of Iltutmish's tomb are completely covered with ornament made up of ancient script from the Koran interspersed with stylized design devices. However, everything is carved in low relief, with little modeling, so that the impression is of a richly textured surface. In the center of the structure is a massive cenotaph.

386. Alāī Darwāza, Delhi (c. 1305)

The Alāī Darwāza gate entrance was designed as one of four new entrance areas to a greatly expanded Quwwatul-Islam Mosque. The enlargement was undertaken by Ala-ud-Dīn Khaljī, nephew of the founder of the Khaljī dynasty, but it was never completed. The Alāī Darwāza (fifty-five feet square by sixty feet high) seems to have been the only part of the elaborate plan that was finished. It is a red and cream sandstone building with contrasting white and black marble. According to Hermann Goetz, the color effects and much of the ornamental design were borrowed from the Hindu art of Gujarāt.[5] From a distance the observer is impressed with the ornamental use of dark and light stone and is aware of an interesting tactile surface quality.

387. Alāī Darwāza, detail of window grilles

These two windows or recessed stone grilles appear to the left of the doorway shown in plate 386. This plate is an excellent study in the balance of light and dark stone as well as the play of light and shadow in the bright sun. The pierced stone screens in the arches are an integral part of the rich and varied ornament on the total wall.

388. Alāī Darwāza, carving detail

The red sandstone base of the Alāī Darwāza is ornamented with horizontal bands of carving. Close inspection reveals motifs that the Indian craftsman had used from a very early date—stylized lotus flowers, vine tracery, and the rectangular stair-step design. It is indeed true that the Alāī Darwāza as architecture is quite different from that of an Indian temple, but many of the elements that make up its surface enrichment are primarily Indian.

389. Alāī Darwāza, arch and façade detail

The calligrapher's art is well indicated on this plate. The curve of the arch is accentuated by the script on the light stone and on the recessed dark stone. Another band of script forms the long white vertical that frames the entrance. The trefoil design, which looks like spears outlining the arch, adds variety and a rhythmical accent to a beautifully conceived entrance area. The total effect is similar to a richly worked tapestry.

390. Alāī Darwāza, detail of arch

391. Alāī Darwāza, repeat pattern detail

On the inside face of the door jamb is an incised repeat pattern. From a distance it appears as surface enrichment for a rather large panel, but on close inspection it becomes a beautifully conceived design. The twining-vine motif has been organized into a circular repeat pattern with a diamond device at the point where four circles come together. This simple arrangement becomes an intricate design as the result of the continuous movement of intertwining vines and the dark-light patterns produced. It might be considered an early problem in optical art.

392. Alāī Darwāza, engaged column detail

On each side of the main doorway is a pair of engaged columns, one in dark and the other in light stone. The entire column may be seen in plate 389. This plate, taken from the left side of the entrance, is a good example of unity with variety.

393. Tomb of Ghyus-ud-dīn Tughlak, Delhi (c. 1325)

Situated on a fortresslike, constructed island in an artificial lake is this massive sandstone structure with inward sloping walls and marble dome. The Muslim rulers of this period must have felt that even in death they needed security. The battered walls seem to add height to the eighty-foot structure, and the dome is slightly pointed, a characteristic that became more pronounced in later Indo-Muslim architecture. This militaristic tomb seems far removed from the Alāī Darwāza style of the preceding dynasty, but the spearhead ornament on the underside of the arch and the red sandstone and marble facing are both continued from the Khaljī period.

394–95. The Hauz-i-Khās, Delhi (1351–88)

The Hauz-i-Khās has been identified by art historians as both a private palace and a college. Its buildings include domed pavilions, pillared halls, and some structures with dormitory-type cells. All are of rubble construction covered with thick plaster. Dressed stone is used only at points of interest, such as entrances or pillared porticos. This type of construction was initiated by Fīroz Shāh Tughlak and continued to be used until the time of Akbar. Plate 394 shows some domed pavilions in the parklike setting that surrounds the site. On the left of plate 395 is the tomb of Fīroz Shāh, the ruler who built the Hauz-i-Khās. The walls are battered, but the slope is not so great as that of Ghyus-ud-dīn's tomb. Some of the plaster is gone, revealing the stone rubble and mortar. The dome, low but slightly pointed, is made of rough-cut stone and concrete with a finish coat of plaster.

396. Tomb of Fīroz Shāh, Hauz-i-Khās, entrance

The dressed stone of the entrance arch is in marked contrast to the dark grey plaster around it, which has become badly stained. The unnecessary beam below the arch (also used in Ghyus-ud-dīn's tomb) may be a concession to Indian construction methods. Some authorities believe that the inscription above the arch was added at a later date by Sikander Lodī.[6] The entrance area has a simple dignified appearance.

397. Tomb of Fīroz Shāh, Hauz-i-Khās, stone railing

In front of the south side of the tomb structure on a low platform is a stone railing, the design of which obviously comes from a wooden prototype. The entrance behind the railing is part of the wing at the side of the tomb. The coarse stone and mortar construction is clearly visible.

398–99. Hauz-i-Khās, general views

Plates 398 and 399 show opposite ends of a huge building on the edge of what once was an artificial lake. The two-story pillared section may explain why some authorities have identified Hauz-i-Khās as a college. Little nooks behind the pillared corridor suggest a dormitory arrangement of rooms.

400. Hauz-i-khās, detail of plate 399

The battered walls and massive buttresses of this huge structure make it look as if it might have been built in medieval Europe. The plaster finish has either come off or been removed so that the coarse stone work is totally revealed, a fact that seems completely in character for such a massive structure.

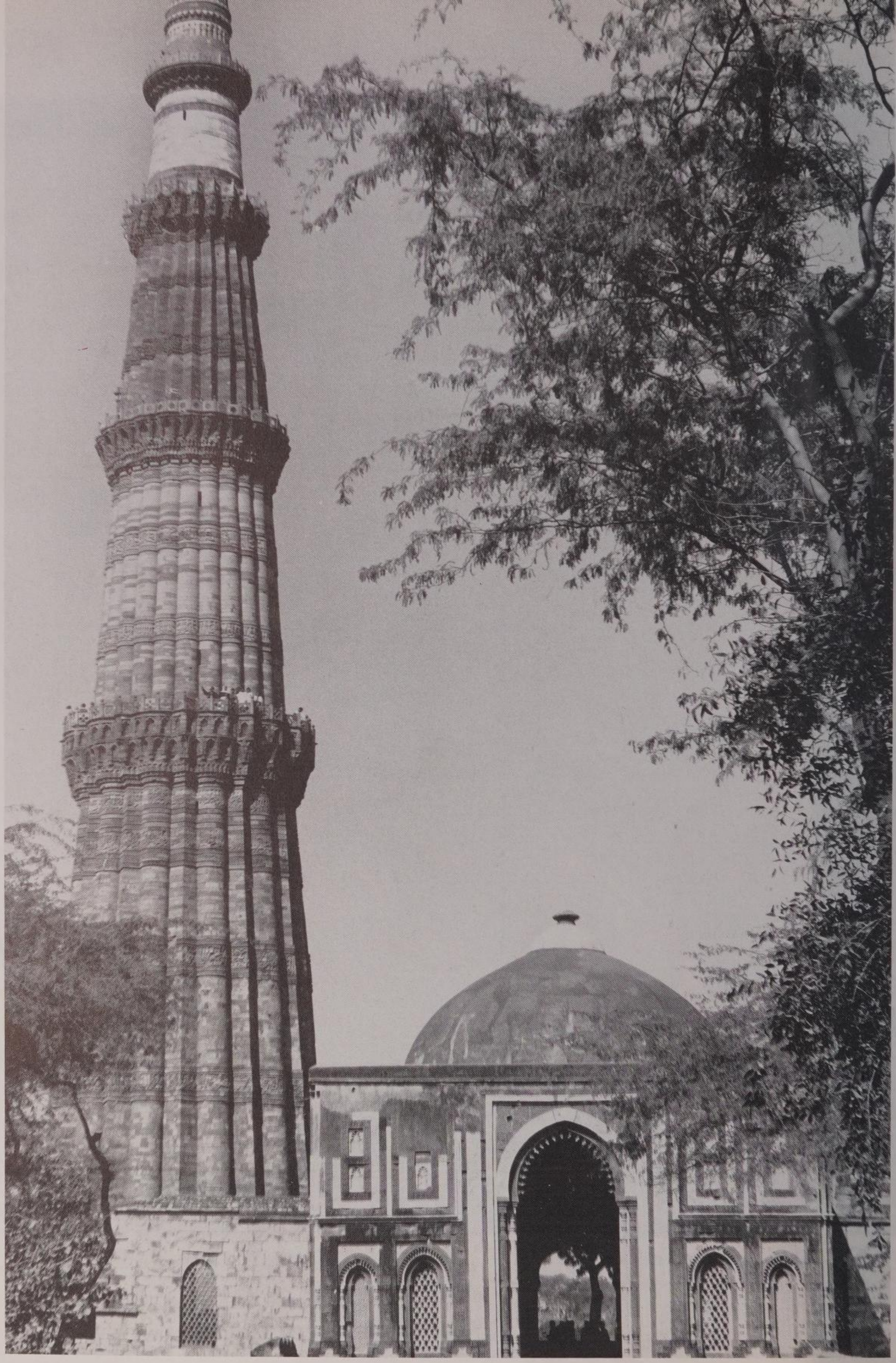
375. Quwwatul-Islam Mosque, pillars, Delhi

376. Quwwatul-Islam Mosque, arched screen detail

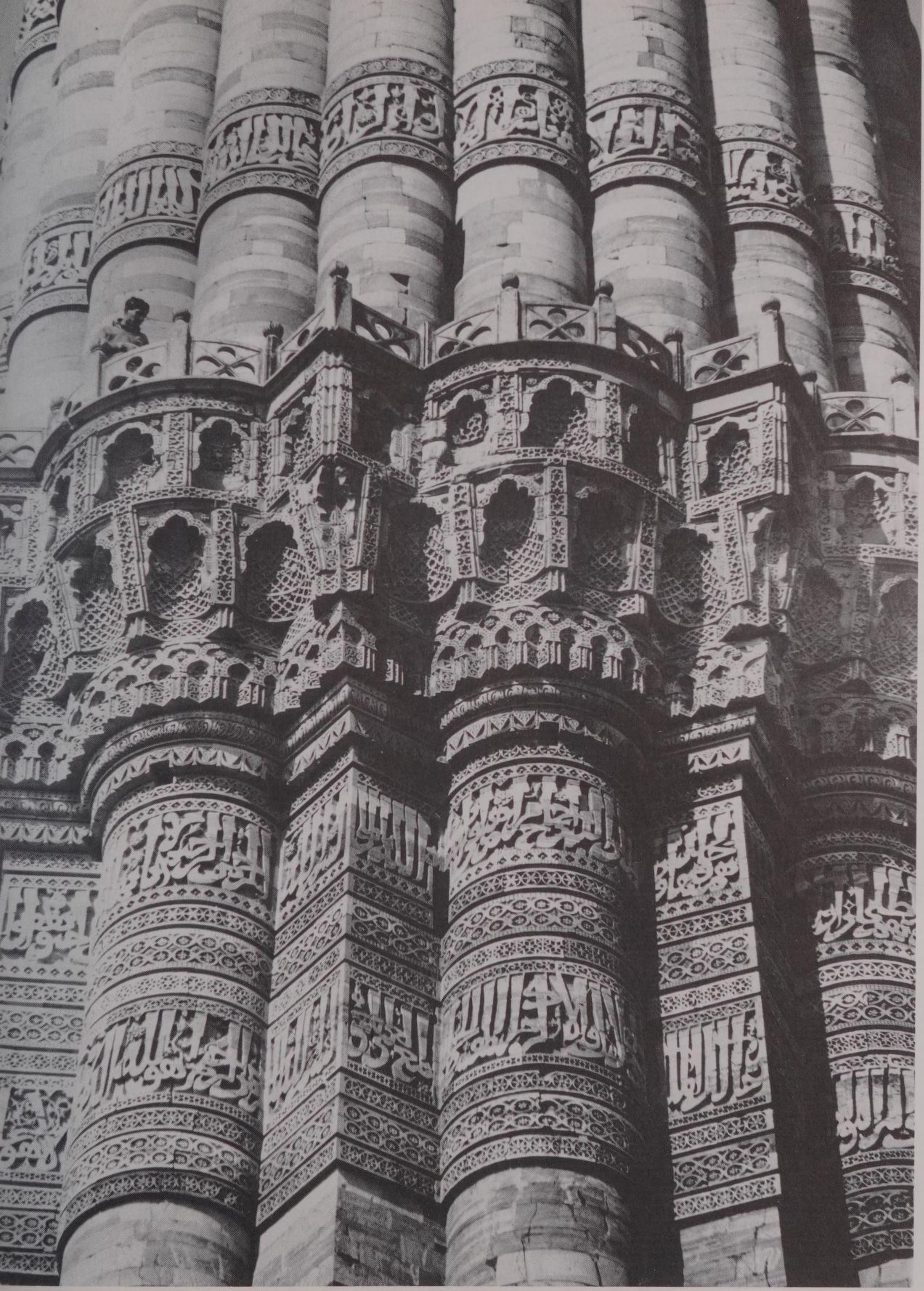
377. Quwwatul-Islam Mosque, arched screen detail

378. Quwwatul-Islam Mosque, arched screen detail

379. Quwwatul-Islam Mosque, screen extension

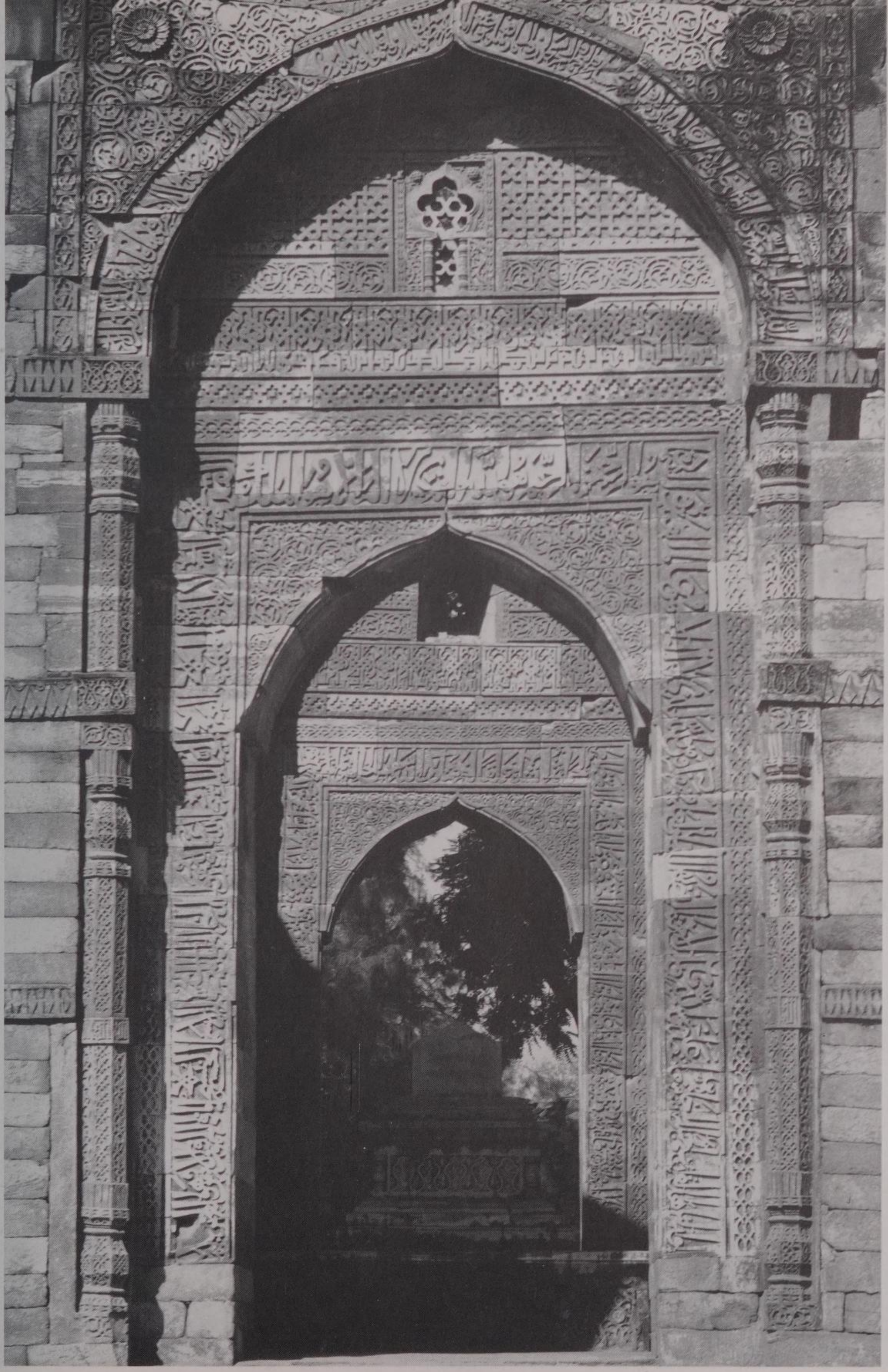


380. Qutb Minār, Delhi

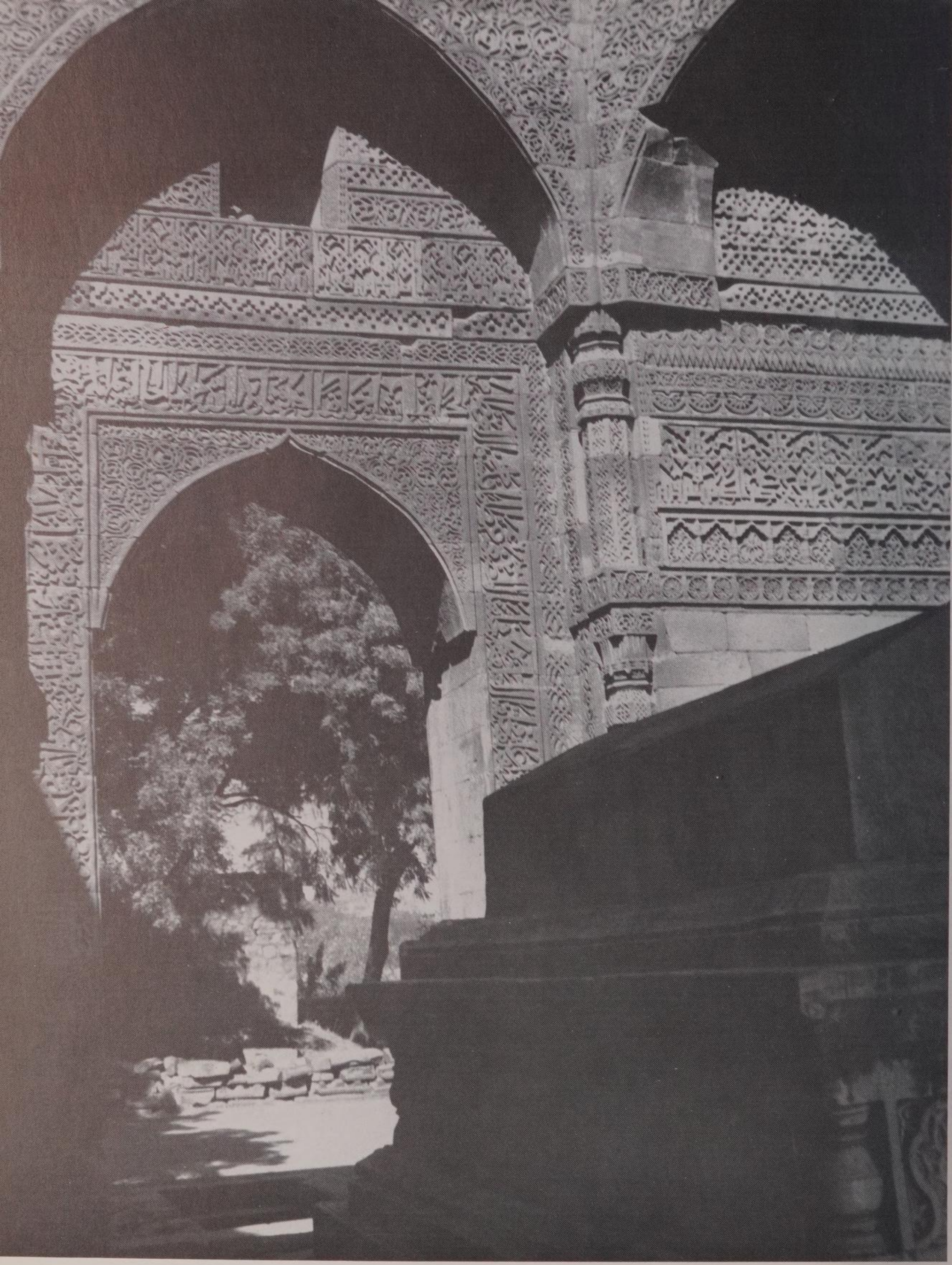


381. Qutb Minār, detail of tower

382. Qutb Mināŕ, detail of tower

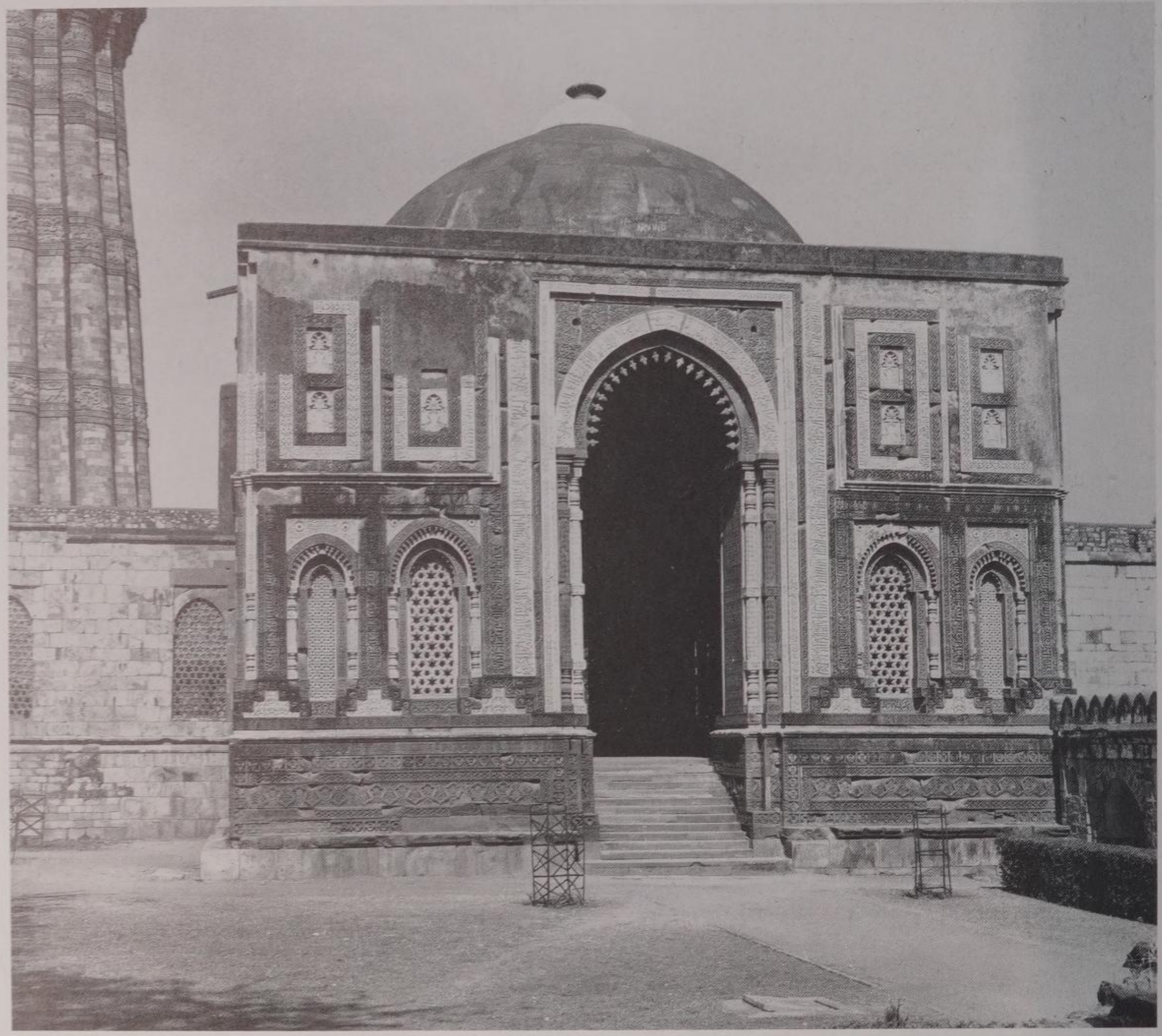


383. Tomb of Iltutmish, exterior detail, Delhi

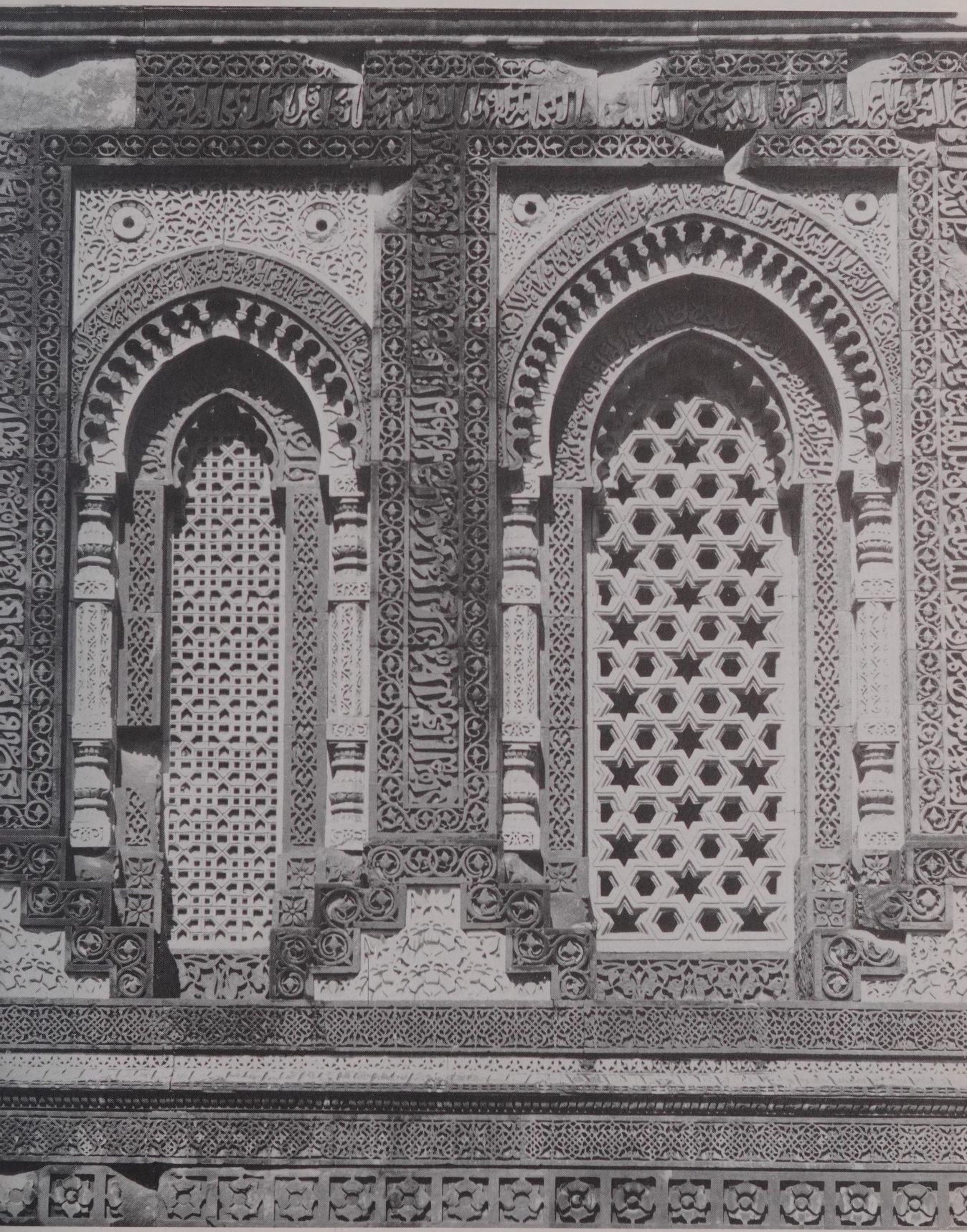


384. Tomb of Iltutmish, interior detail

385. Tomb of Iltutmish, interior detail



386. Alāī Darwāza, Delhi

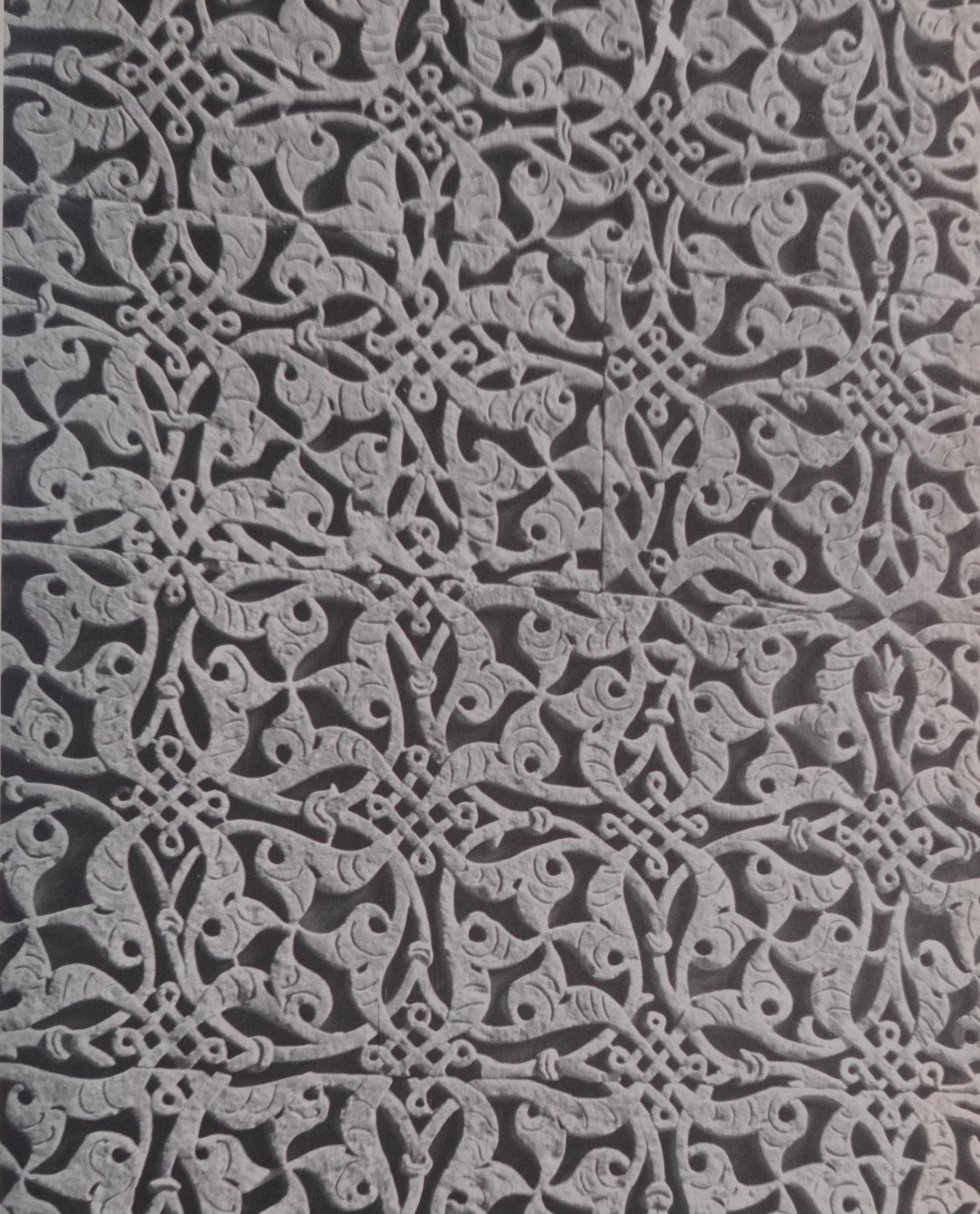


387. Alāī Darwāza, window grilles

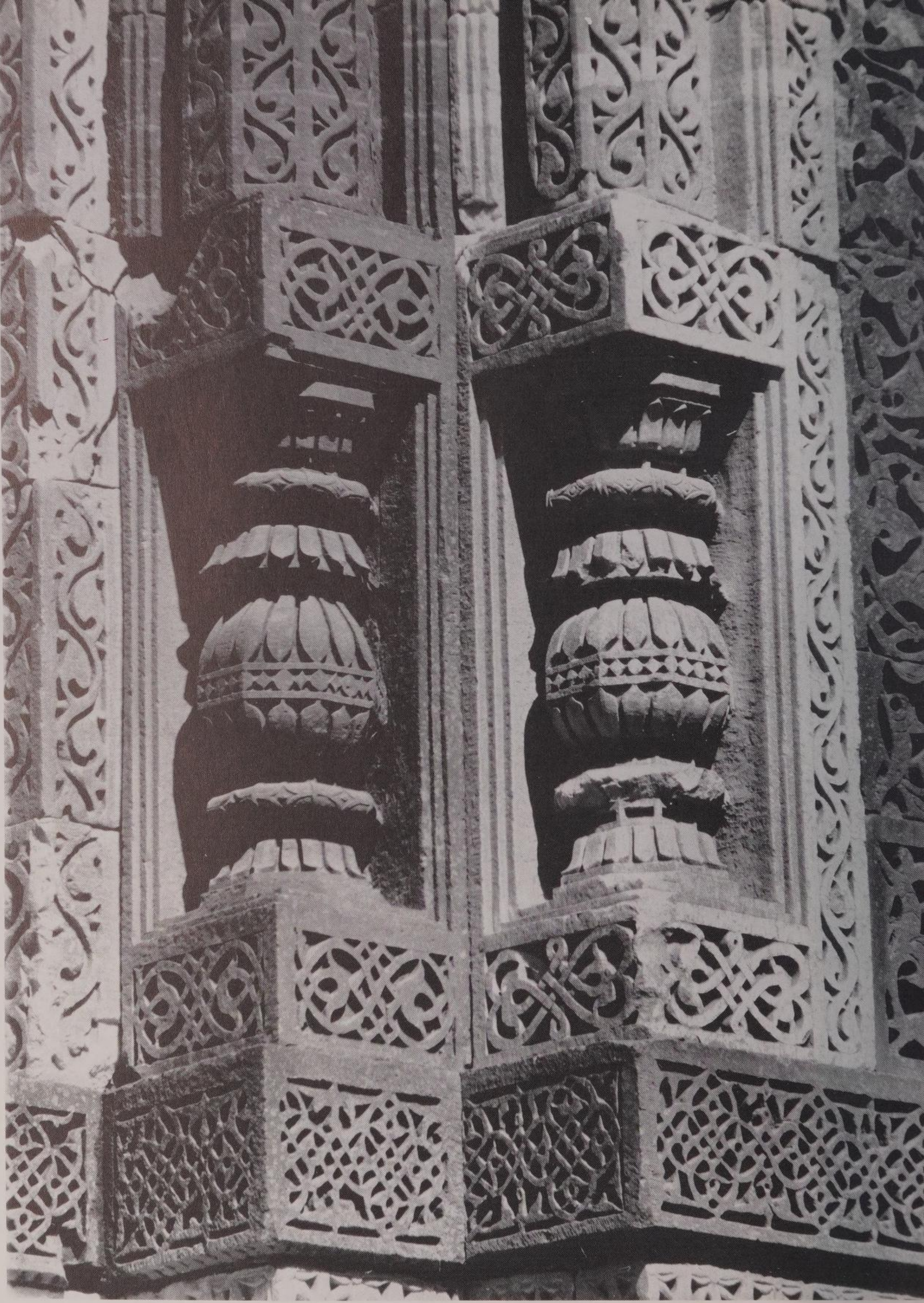
388. Alāī Darwāza, carving detail

389. Alāī Darwāza, arch and façade detail

390. Alāī Darwāza, detail of arch



391. Alāī Darwāza, repeat pattern detail

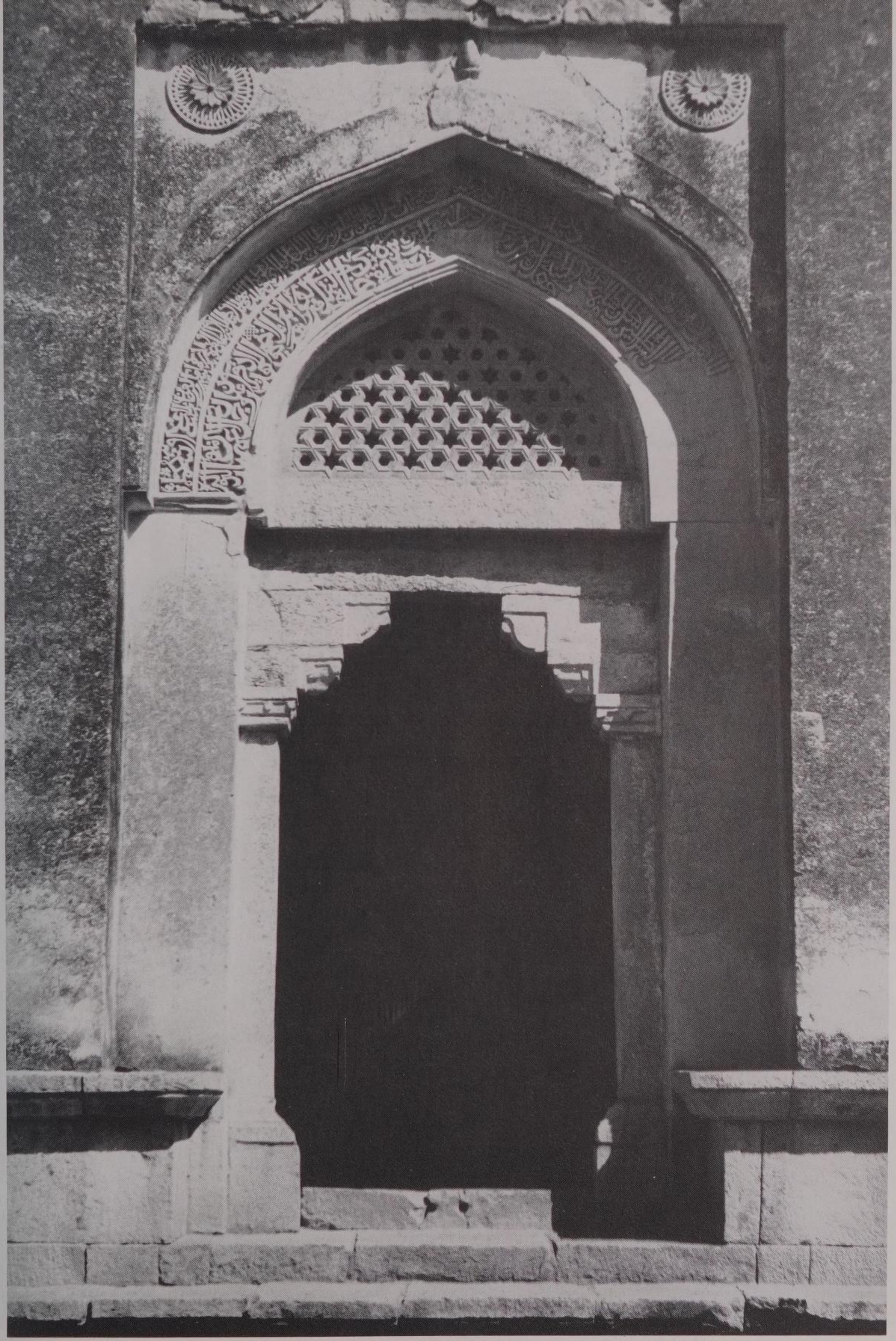


392. Alāī Darwāza, engaged column detail

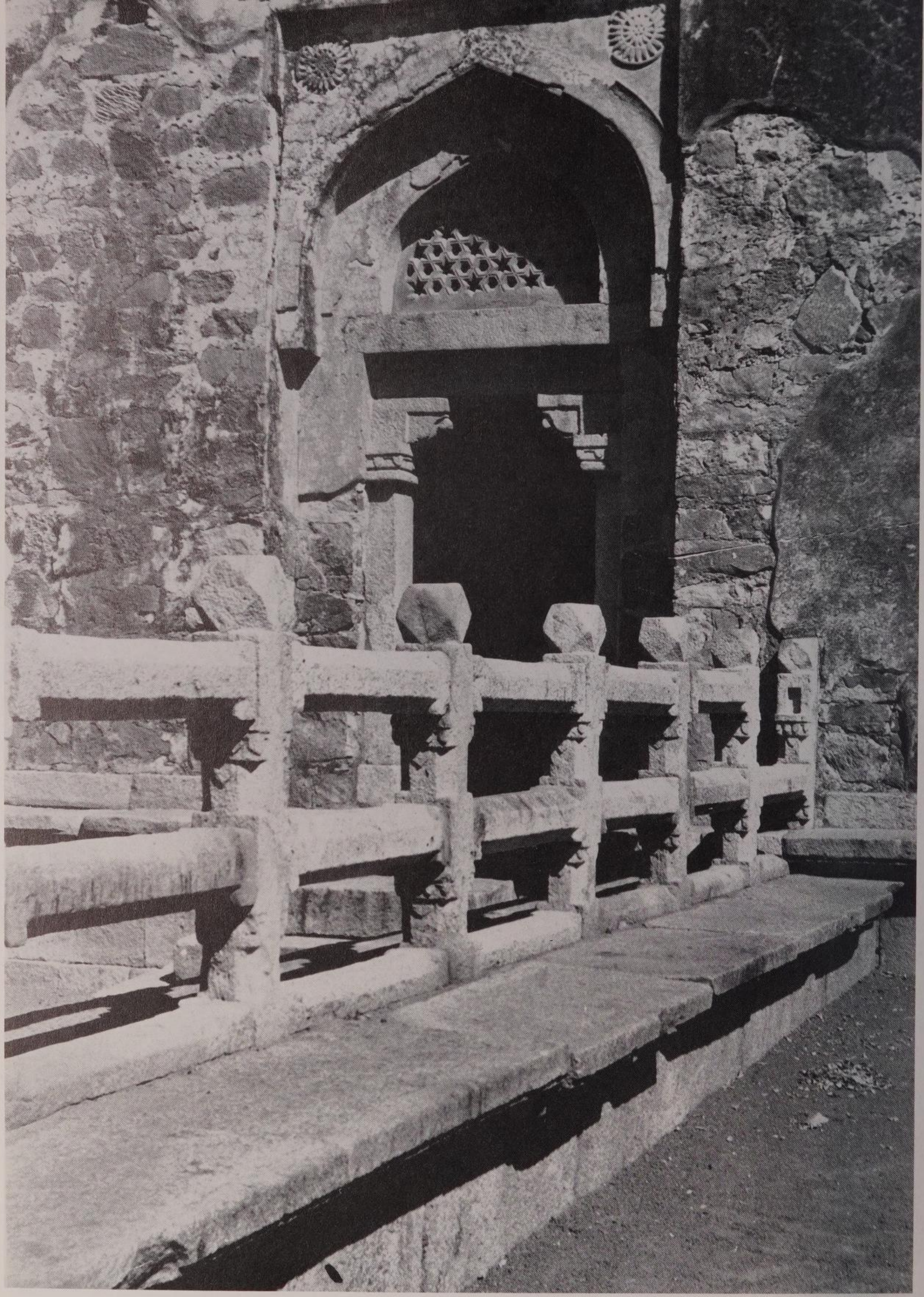
393. Ghyus-ud-dīn Tughlak Tomb, Delhi

394. Hauz-i-Khās, Delhi

395. Hauz-i-Khās, Delhi



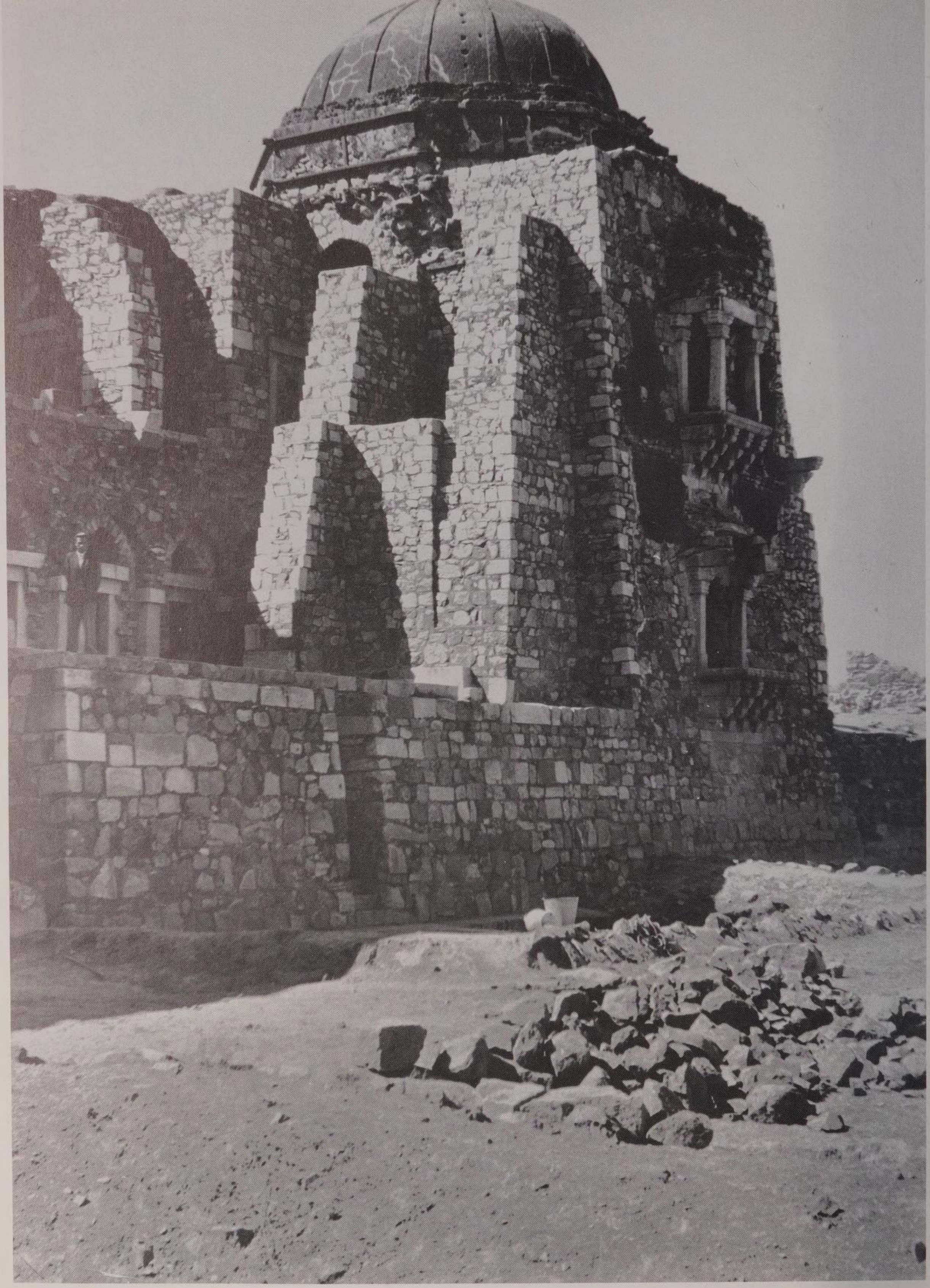
396. Fīroz Shāh Tomb, entrance, Hauz-i-Khās



397. Fīroz Shāh Tomb, stone railing, Hauz-i-Khās

398. Hauz-i-Khās, general view

399. Hauz-i-Khās, general view



400. Hauz-i-Khās, detail of plate 399

9
The Moghul Period

AFTER THE DEATH OF FIROZ SHĀH THE SULTANATE FELL INTO DECLINE AND SOME OF THE outlying rulers became more powerful than the sultan. There was little building in the Delhi area, but this was not true in the provinces. In 1398 Tīmūr invaded and destroyed Delhi, which further weakened Delhi's imperial power. During the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries no great architecture was attempted. In 1526 Bābur invaded India and subdued the two main powers of northern India, the Lodi sultans and the Rājput rulers of Mewar. This was the start of the Moghul dynasty, during which Indo-Muslim architecture reached its zenith. The first two rulers, Bābur and Humāyūn, had little time for art since they were involved with securing their conquests. It was not until Akbar's rule (1556–1605) that the architecture of the Moghuls became firmly established.

Agra (Akbar Reign)

401. Agra Fort, exterior walls, Agra (c. 1565–73)

The great fortress-palace of Agra, built on the banks of the Yamunā River, was one of several fortified residences built by Akbar. A remarkable feature of these forts is the massive enclosing walls of solid sandstone. The one at Agra is double-walled, the outer wall being forty feet high and the inner wall seventy feet. In this great wall are four entrances, the most important ones the Delhi Gate on the north and the Amar Singh Gate on the south. The area within the walls is said to have once contained nearly five hundred buildings of red sandstone. Although the wall is massive, it has design elements that give it character.

402. Amar Singh Gate, Agra Fort, Agra (c. 1565–73)

The Delhi Gate was designed as the main entrance to the fort, but the visitor usually is admitted by the Amar Singh Gate, an entrance composed of several small units that tend to disappear into the design of the great wall and become an integral part of it.

403. Amar Singh Gate, arch detail

This plate shows typical architectural details of the Akbar period—red sandstone with white marble accents, pointed arch, and simple geometric designs. The vigor and vitality found in the early Moghul architecture is undoubtedly the result of Akbar's employment of the best craftsmen available, whether Hindu or Muslim.

404. Jahāngīrī Mahal, Agra Fort, Agra (c. 1570)

Most of the early structures built by Akbar at Agra were destroyed by his grandson, Shāh Jahān, to make way for the more elegant marble buildings. However, a palace within the fort still in relatively good condition is Jahāngīrī Mahal (Jahāngīr's palace).[1] This building is often compared with the Hindu palaces of the Rājput kings and is cited as a transitional building, having both Hindu and Muslim elements. There can be no doubt that the Jahāngīrī Mahal is as much Hindu as Muslim, but this is also true of other Akbar buildings.

405. Jahāngīrī Mahal, arch detail

Characteristics of the Akbar style of architecture are clearly evident in this plate: the linear emphasis

achieved by contrasting values of white marble and red sandstone, the use of low-relief carving to give a textured surface, and the large areas of inlaid geometric design.

406. Jahāngīrī Mahal, detail of niche

The front façade is made up of a series of decorative arched niches, a popular device in early Moghul architecture and often identified as being of Muslim origin. In rock-cut Buddhist architecture the Indians had also used an arched niche at a very early date (as early as the fifth century). The projecting balconies, the supporting brackets, and the stylized lotus forms under the balconies are also Indian devices.

407–8. Jahāngīrī Mahal, inner court

The façade in plate 407 shows a group of rooms called a guest house. It is next to the area designated as once occupied by Jodh Bai, Akbar's Hindu wife. The architectural detail is similar to design devices used on the exterior. Plate 408 is a detail to the left of the main arch.

409–10. Jahāngīrī Mahal, wall details

Plate 409 shows a section of the enclosing wall on the roof terrace of the guest house (pl. 407). Through the open panel a bridge across the Yamunā is visible. The motif used across the top of the wall repeats the battlement design used on the interior walls of the fort. The small lotus designs at the top are almost identical with some of those at Sāñchī. The wall detail of plate 410 combines plain surface and raised geometric pattern. The band of floral ornament is identical to that in plate 409.

411. Jahāngīrī Mahal, interior court detail

This is one of many examples of Akbar's attempt to synthesize Muslim and Indian art. The interior court is basically Indian, having a wide roof overhang, heavy brackets, projecting balcony, and massive pillars.

412. Jahāngīrī Mahal, pillar and bracket detail

This plate shows the richness of the carving on both pillars and brackets. It also points up the dramatic dark and light contrasts that result from the wide overhang of the roof.

413–15. Jahāngīrī Mahal, kiosk details

On the roof terrace of Jahāngīrī Mahal is a massive open pavilion. Plates 413–14 show the huge pillars that support the heavy roof and overhang. Both the pillars and the kiosk itself are of Indian design. Plate 415 shows a pillar detail.

Fatehpur Sīkrī

416–17. General view of pools and terraces, Fatehpur Sīkrī (c. 1571–78)

Akbar's most ambitious project was Fatehpur Sīkrī, an architectural gem that ranks with the Tāj Mahal among Indo-Muslim building achievements. An isolated rocky ridge about twenty-six miles west of Agra was selected as the site of the new capital after a holy man (Sālim Chīshti) from Sīkrī had predicted the birth of a son to Akbar. Enclosed within the walls of the so-called city (approximately two miles long by one mile wide) is a group of palatial dwellings, government and religious buildings, residences of official and professional people, great open terraces, elaborate pools, and utilitarian structures. The building techniques suggest that the architects and craftsmen were primarily Indian and used indigenous methods of construction. The buildings have a rather low horizontal emphasis and are unified in their architectural style, but there is great variety in the treatment of details. This amazing project, which rose as if by magic, was the center of Akbar's court for approximately seventeen years. Its time of glory was brief, for Akbar left Fatehpur Sīkrī in 1588 and never returned except for a short visit in 1601. The city, abandoned for lack of water and deserted for approximately four hundred years, could be either an empty shell that once was the center of a great empire or the silent record of a dictator's wish, depending upon one's point of view. The city remains today more or less as it was left, and imaginative visitors can transport themselves back to the colorful, glittering court of Akbar. Plate 416 shows a large open terrace with the *Diwāni Khās* (hall of private audience) at the far end, the open pavilion or a school at the left, plus a pool with a bridged island

in the center. On occasion the island may have been used as a throne platform or as a stage for dancers. Plate 417 shows the top of the Panch Mahal above the school and part of the pool in the foreground. The Panch Mahal is a five-storied open pavilion, the exact use of which is not known. It may have been an observatory or simply an open building for "taking the air."

418–19. Colonnaded corridor, Fatehpur Sīkrī

The covered passageway and the high-walled terrace shown in plate 418 enabled women to walk to the Panch Mahal in seclusion. Here the horizontal emphasis is clearly seen, although the last building is a five-storied structure. Plate 419 is a close-up view of ornamental motifs that were also used in Agra Fort.

420–21. Turkish Sultāna's House, Fatehpur Sīkrī

The small royal residence, called the Turkish Sultāna's House, is indeed modest in size: it is a single-storied structure containing only one main room surrounded by open pavilions. A timeless gem, the Sultāna's house has much of the quality of a Frank Lloyd Wright organic house: simple construction with a horizontal emphasis; wide, sheltering roof; integral ornament; and the feeling of "oneness" in all its various parts.

422–23. Turkish Sultāna's House, details

Small though this residence is, no effort was spared in producing a rich and elegant structure. These two plates reveal the rich surface texture. From a distance one is impressed by the handsome design of the architectural elements, but as one approaches the building, admiration turns to wonder at the marvelous work of the stone craftsman. There can be little question that the methods of construction are totally Indian or that the surface enrichment suggests a woodcarver's technique.

424. Jodh Bai's Palace, entrance, Fatehpur Sīkrī

Jodh Bai, Akbar's Hindu wife, was Jahāngīr's mother and is often mentioned as Akbar's favorite queen. If the size of her palace is a criterion, there can be little doubt of her position. Jodh Bai's palace is much the largest palatial residence at Fatehpur Sīkrī. The six-pointed star that was used as an ornament at the entrance of Jahāngīr's palace in Agra Fort is also found here.

425–26. Jodh Bai's Palace

It is interesting to compare this large royal residence with Jahāngīrī Mahal at Agra Fort. Its exterior façade is a relatively plain wall, thirty-two feet high, which encloses a rectangular space measuring 320 feet by 215 feet. Attached to the inner surface of the wall are the living quarters. All rooms face a huge interior courtyard to which there is only one entrance. The palace compound might be described as a small city within a city since it contains several apartments, service areas, baths, a private chapel, and roof terraces for secluded promenades. The guarded gatehouse entrance and high exterior walls indicate that privacy was important. Some of the roof units are covered with blue-green glazed tiles, adding an interesting touch of color to the rich red sandstone. On the left of plate 425 is a private chapel or temple. Plate 426 shows the panel to the right of the chapel entrance. The long slender diamond motif appears several times in Jodh Bai's palace. The massive character of this enclosure is reminiscent of a Khajurāho balcony.

427. Jodh Bai's Palace, pillar detail

A close view of a pillar reveals the character of the massive columns. The use of projecting and recessed sections is similar to the work on earlier Hindu pillars, and some of the motifs are almost identical to earlier Indian design.

428. Jodh Bai's Palace, interior detail

This plate shows a section of the façade behind a pillared porch. This unit is part of a section called the summer palace because it is on the north side of the complex. On the south side is its exact duplicate, called the winter palace. On the exterior wall of the summer palace is a hanging porch, called the Palace of Air, which once overlooked an artificial lake. The ornament and detail shown here seem closely related to Hindu architecture, as one might expect in the residence of a former Rājput princess.

429. Miriam's House, Fatehpur Sīkrī

This simple one-storied structure is known today as Miriam's House. According to tradition Miriam was Akbar's Christian wife, but there seems to be little historical evidence that this was so. The house, situated in an open area, consists of several rooms but has no inner court or attached pavilions. The outside walls are relatively plain except for the tactile quality of the red sandstone. The almost chaste simplicity of some buildings and the rich ornamentation of others adds interest to the total complex.

430. Rāja Bīrbal's House, Fatehpur Sīkrī

Rāja Bīrbal was Akbar's prime minister, and according to tradition, this was his residence. The house has four rooms on the ground floor with entrance porches on the north and south and two rooms that open on two terraces on the second floor.

431–34. Rāja Bīrbal's House, details

The surface enrichment of Bīrbal's house does not completely cover every area (as was true in the Turkish Sultāna's House), but is used to frame various architectural units. The treatment of the side wall is indeed rich but restrained. Plate 432 shows a combination of both geometric and floral patterning so skillfully handled that a complete unity results. The stone looks as if it had been as easily carved as wood.

The ornamentation of the brackets which support the wide roof overhang shown in plate 433 is perhaps the most amazing architectural detail of the house. This worm's eye view of the brackets overemphasizes their importance but also reveals the richness of the ornament.

From the earliest period the Indian craftsman has been an expert in handling floral ornamentation. Plate 434 shows that in Akbar's time he had not lost his proficiency, although the requirements of the new regime were different. This ornament is on one of the pilasters.

435. Astrologer's seat, Fatehpur Sīkrī

According to tradition this small open pavilion was built for a Hindu astrologer in Akbar's court. The entire structure looks as if it might have come from a Hindu or Jain temple, particularly the strut design between the pillars.

436. Diwāni-Khās, Fatehpur Sīkrī

The Diwāni-Khās has much in common with the simple design of Miriam's house. It is a relatively plain, two-storied structure with a flat terraced roof and small pillared cupolas at each corner. The walls are plain but have pierced stone screens to let in light. It is approximately forty feet square in size.

437. Diwāni-Khās, bracket detail

The brackets supporting the overhang are relatively plain, and thus conform to the simple design of the total structure. Slightly to the left of center is a pierced stone screen.

438–40. Diwāni-Khās, interior details

The interior of the Diwāni-Khās consists of a single chamber about twenty-eight feet square that has a continuous hanging balcony around its four sides. From each of the four corners of the balcony run four diagonal passageways or bridges, which meet on a central platform supported by a massive pillar-bracket device. It has been suggested that this amazing bit of construction was designed to produce a throne that would symbolize the emperor's dominion over the four quarters.[2] Another suggestion is that it is symbolic of Vishnu's Pillar or Tree of the Universe. Whatever its symbolism, it is indeed an original construction, the product of an ingenious mind. Plate 439 indicates the size of the circular platform and the bridges connecting it with the balcony. Such a throne would place the emperor in an exalted position so that he would almost be removed from the scene. His ministers were seated around the balcony and those of lesser rank on the ground floor.

The amazing pillar in plate 440 with its bracket capital is hard to believe, even when seen in person. The surface of the pillar and the thirty-six brackets that support the platform are polished to a glassy finish. The brackets and the balcony construction seem to stem from wooden prototypes.

441. Bulwānd Darwāza, Fatehpur Sīkrī

The southern entrance to the great mosque is a triumphal arch that replaced the original gate design after Akbar's victorious campaign in the Deccan. It has been variously described as the greatest archway in the world, the most striking gate design ever built, and the tallest and most beautifully organized gateway in the world. It is a magnificent edifice that towers 176 feet high and can be seen for miles around. Architecturally the project created problems, the chief one being how to design a doorway that would look correct in this massive façade and yet not lose sight of "man as the module." The solution was to use a series of diminishing design elements, which helped reduce the immense façade to human proportions.

442. Bulwānd Darwāza, back and side view

This view of the Gate of Victory is seen through one of the arches of the mosque. The back or interior façade with its three arches, battlements, and raised domes is not as high as the front façade, but it still completely dominates the mosque area. Although the original mosque design was symmetrically arranged with the shrine as the focal point, few critics would wish the gate removed for the sake of symmetry.

443. Tomb of Salīm Chishtī, Fatehpur Sīkrī

Salīm Chishtī's tomb is a marked contrast to the massive grandeur of the Bulwānd Darwāza. It is a small (twenty-four feet square), jewellike structure of white marble (the only marble building in Fatehpur Sīkrī), which to me seems out of place. Some historians assume that the original tomb was red sandstone and that the marble facing was added at the end of Jahāngīr's reign or during the early part of Shāh Jahān's.[3] Others treat it as the earliest Indo-Muslim building in marble. The design of the building seems elegant and possibly effeminate when compared with the simplicity and vigor of the other Akbar buildings.

444. Jami Masjid, Fatehpur Sīkrī

The Jami Masjid of Fatehpur Sīkrī, the first great congregational mosque in India (and one of the largest), occupies a rectangular area of 542 by 438 feet. On three sides are pillared cloisters enclosing the great open courtyard and on the fourth is the sanctuary. The front façade of the mosque is divided into three sections—in the center a large arched alcove inside a great rectangular shape and on each side an arcaded wing. Above the center section is a large (forty-one feet in diameter) dome covering the prayer hall, and centered over each side wing is a smaller dome (twenty-five feet in diameter). The rest of the roof is flat and is supported on pillars and brackets similar to other construction at Fatehpur Sīkrī. The domes are not bulbous but are of the so-called flat type used in pre-Moghul architecture. Outlining the entire roof is a series of small pillared domes (similar to those used on the enclosing mosque wall) that add interest to the skyline silhouette.

445–46. Jami Masjid, prayer-hall details

The mosaic design on the walls, particularly in the main prayer hall, is indeed handsome. The rich surface treatment is undoubtedly the finest in any Akbar building. Plate 445 shows the imam's pulpit and part of the mihrab on the extreme left. In the wall on the right are arched openings into the north pillared aisle and chapel.

Plate 446 shows the small mihrab on the southern end of the west wall. It balances the one shown just right of the pulpit in plate 445.

447. Jami Masjid, interior detail of chapel entrance

A corner section of the chapel in the north wing appears in this plate. Through the arch is a small end-wall section of the arcaded wing. The built-up triangles across each of the corners, one of which is shown here, change the top of the square chamber into an octagon, from which the dome rises.

Sikandra

448. Akbar's tomb, entrance gate, Sikandra (c. 1613)

Scholars generally believe that Akbar planned and probably initiated the construction of his own tomb. However, some authorities think that the tomb was entirely executed by Jahāngīr. The design of the building suggests that it was an Akbar conception. Unfortunately Akbar did not live to see it completed,

and his son, Jahāngīr, finished the monument. The plan of the mausoleum includes a large enclosed rectangular garden (about 320 feet square) with the tomb structure in the center. Within the walls are the main gate on the south side and three false gates on the other three sides. The main entrance is a handsomely designed gateway with four marble minarets. Structural design and bold geometric inlaid ornament are skillfully combined to produce a strong and vigorous composition.

449–50. Akbar's tomb, gate details

These plates are good examples of the bold geometric inlay that is characteristic of this monument. The inlay is not restricted to the use of white marble, but other colored stones are also used, adding variety and richness. Plate 449, a detail from the left side of the central arch, and plate 450, an enlargement of the vertical panel just left of the main arch, display the bold design and rich quality of the inlaid ornament.

451. Akbar's tomb, general view

In the center of the walled garden stands this immense square building with four identical façades. The main floor is a simple, dignified structure that does not seem to be related to the elements above it. Historians have suggested that the ground floor was probably finished before Akbar's death, and that at this point Jahāngīr took over. Certainly the character of the structure changes on the upper levels, becoming light and more delicate in appearance. The building is essentially red sandstone except for some marble used on the top story.

452. Akbar's tomb, central arch (south side)

The design of the central arch on each of the four façades is similar in character to the main entrance gate. They are bold, simple structures whose geometric inlaid ornament adds interest and variety. The top of the rectangular structure is broken by a reciprocal cross design.

453. Akbar's tomb, detail of central arch

454. Akbar's tomb, upper level detail

This plate shows the type of construction used above the ground floor. This design is clearly different from the simple, massive arcade of the ground floor. Visible are portions of four stories, including a very small section of the marble arcade at the top.

455. Akbar's tomb, east gate detail

The pierced sandstone grilles used in Indo-Muslim architecture are less famous than their more elegant marble counterparts. However, there is an indigenous beauty and strength in the simple design cut into the stone.

Agra (Jahāngīr Reign)

456. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, interior view of entrance gate, Agra (c. 1626)

Jahāngīr's reign may be considered a transition between the bold, vigorous architecture of Akbar and the more elegant style of Shāh Jahān, the two great Moghul builders. After Akbar's death the trend was toward a more elegant architecture that used white marble rather than red sandstone. The only significant architecture produced during Jahāngīr's reign is the tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula. This mausoleum, built by Nūr Jahān (Jahāngīr's empress) in memory of her father, is a small marble structure with a walled garden. In the center of each of the four walls is a red sandstone gateway similar to the one shown here. All elements—entrance gate, garden, paved walks, water courses—are small in scale when compared to Akbar's tomb. Apparently Nūr Jahān was primarily interested in an elegant structure even though it was small.

457. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, general view

One's first impression of the tomb after entering the gateway might compare to looking at a piece of ivory that somehow was enlarged to building size. Such an impression results partially from the extensive inlaid ornament, which seems to change the white marble to an ivory tone. An elegant building whose

structural design reads well as architecture, this quiet, peaceful tomb is among the best Moghul monuments.

458–59. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, ornament details

The pleasing proportions and rich inlaid ornament of this tomb produce a beautiful building. The wide roof overhang and the ornamented brackets of plate 458 are still very much in evidence, as are the pierced screens and geometric inlaid designs.

The details of this building may help the reader appreciate the scope of the ornament. Although the color of the semiprecious stones must be imagined, the translucent quality of the marble is fairly well suggested in plate 459.

460–63. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, tower details

The octagonal towers that give this building much of its character are an integral part of the design. The side paneling, the wide roof overhang, and the brackets continue around the base of the tower. Even the platform at the top of each tower (reached by inside stairs) repeats the wide overhang and bracket design, thus integrating the tower forms with the main structure. Although they have been described as dwarf minarets, the towers appear to be correct and in scale with the rest of the building. The effect of this tomb is complete peace and quiet, and the substantial towers, so much a part of the structure itself, seem to be silent guardians of that peace.

Looking up from the base of the tower (pl. 462) presents a dramatic view and emphasizes the brackets and overhanging roof. The inlay *(pietra dura)* (see pl. 463) is done in semiprecious stones such as jade, cornelian, lapis, onyx, topaz, and jasper, which work together to produce a rich but subtle quality in the translucent marble.

464. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, pavilion detail

The small square pavilion above the ground floor, an important and essential part of the total building, is an architectural gem in its own right. Its position and size emphasize the central arch on each of the four sides of the building, producing the effect of a two-story gate structure.

465–67. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, screen details

These exquisitely carved screens are the main source of light for the pavilion. Plate 465 indicates the variety and richness of the inlaid ornament and shows how well it combines with the carved screens. In the center of the pavilion are two cenotaphs, one of which is partially shown in plate 466. The interior walls are also marble and are completely ornamented with inlaid semiprecious stone. Plate 466 is an interior shot showing light coming through the screens, producing a sparkling, gemlike quality. Plate 467 is a detail of one of the screens shown in plate 465.

468–69. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, railing details

Plate 468 shows the watergate entrance to the tomb with the Yamunā River and the city of Agra in the background. The small sections of railing shown in these two plates indicate the skill of the craftsman. Carving a solid panel of marble into such delicate pierced tracery seems a near-impossible task.

Agra (Shāh Jahān Reign)

470. Diwāni-Khās and throne terrace, Agra Fort, Agra (c. 1637)

The reign of Shāh Jahān is sometimes called the Golden Age of Moghul architecture. It was, indeed, an age of splendor and magnificence, the result of a court where luxury and elegance dominated. At Agra Fort the massive, bold structures of Akbar's time were removed to make way for the new architecture. The remodeling started soon after Shāh Jahān became the ruler (1628) and continued at intervals throughout most of his reign. The Diwāni-Khās has an unusual double-columned portico. In front of the Diwāni-Khās is a large terrace with two throne platforms, one in white marble and the other in black. All of the palatial residences are on the bank of the Yamunā River and the Tāj Mahal is visible in the distance.

471. Diwāni-Khās, base detail

The base of the Diwāni-Khās is ornamented with elegant, floral carving. The bold geometric patterns found on earlier structures have been replaced by delicate, curving lines and realistic flower forms, which, if used to excess, might become weak and sentimental.

472. Diwāni-Khās, pillar detail

The ornament of the double pillars combines both carving and inlay, the latter repeating and emphasizing the character of the pillar design. The shaft of the column is relatively plain, but the inlay emphasizes each flat surface of the ten-sided pillar with a single-line border.

473. Khās Mahal, general view, Agra Fort, Agra (c. 1637)

Just south of the Diwāni-Khās is the Khās Mahal (private palace), an arrangement of three marble pavilions on a raised marble terrace overlooking a garden of grape vines originally laid out by Akbar. The center pavilion is rectangular and has an arched colonnade across the front. On either side of this are two smaller identical pavilions that consist of two rooms separated by an open gallery with a curved roof. The backs of the buildings look down on the river and over to the Tāj Mahal. In the center of the raised terrace is an ornamental pool with a series of fountains. Under the terrace are underground rooms designed for use during the intense heat of summer. Plate 473 gives an idea of the garden plan with its broad marble walks and central fountain pool. A sandstone structure consisting of a series of two-storied rooms completely encloses the garden.

474. Golden Pavilion, Agra Fort, Agra (c. 1637)

This building stands to the left of the Khās Mahal and is a replica of the one on the right. Shāh Jahān's daughters lived in these two pavilions, which were said to have been ornamented with gold. The bend of the river at this point makes the Tāj appear to be on the opposite bank, although it is on the same side as the fort.

475. Musamman Burj, Agra Fort, Agra (c. 1637)

Close to the Golden Pavilion is this charming structure, also known as the Octagonal Tower. Its rich inlaid ornament and handsome pierced screens make it one of the most exquisite pieces of architecture in the fort. The tower, partially overhanging the seventy-foot wall of the fort, seems to be a fairy-tale structure suspended in air. It was here that Shāh Jahān spent his final years as the prisoner of his son, Aurangzeb.

476–77. Musamman Burj, details

Floral designs and delicate tracery patterns were the preferred court style. The ten-sided pillars are similar in form to those of the Diwāni-Khās. The translucent quality of the marble and the elegance of the ornament is apparent in these plates. According to tradition, Shāh Jahān intended the Musamman Burj as the residence of his empress, Mumtaz Mahal. If this is so, its delicate, more feminine character is completely appropriate.

478. Moti Masjid, entrance gate, Agra Fort, Agra (1646–54)

The Moti Masjid or Pearl Mosque occupies a rectangle (234 feet by 187 feet) that includes a large open courtyard with a pillared arcade on three sides and the sanctuary at the western end. This plate, taken through an arch in the mosque, shows one of the gates centered in the three walls. Everything within the mosque area is of a flawless white marble. Its translucent quality, combined with the simplicity of the structural design, produces a quiet, eloquent architectural statement.

479. Moti Masjid, front façade

The front façade of the mosque consists of seven beautifully proportioned arches, above which are a series of delicate kiosks. The three onion domes are well placed, the center one being slightly raised on its base. In the center of the open courtyard is an ornamental pool for ceremonial cleansing. It is interesting to note that this bulbous type of dome, which the Muslims introduced to India, also appears decoratively in early Indian architecture. Some of the chaitya-hall façades show a Buddha figure standing under a

dome that swells outward at its base and terminates in a large finial—certainly an onion dome. This early Indian dome seems to be a semi-three-dimensional interpretation of the horseshoe arch. Certainly the arch and dome had been known in India since very early times but were not used structurally in stone architecture.

480–81. Moti Masjid, interior details

The interior of the sanctuary (159 feet by 56 feet), with its handsomely proportioned arcades and the translucent softness of its marble, seems to produce a spiritual atmosphere. At either end of the outside colonnade is a pierced marble door of superb design and workmanship. The only color in the entire building is a soft yellow inlay, marking the individual prayer spaces on the floor. The mosque reflects a skillful restraint that is not often found.

482. Tāj Mahal, entrance gate, Agra (c. 1634–46)

The crowning achievement of Shāh Jahān's architectural projects is the Tāj Mahal—the tomb he built for his empress, Arjund Banu Begum (called Mumtaj Mahal, "chosen of the palace"). Its construction, started a year after her death, took approximately ten years, although the number of workers employed daily was said to have been twenty thousand. Some historians give the completion date for the total project, including gardens, as 1653. It follows the design of a garden-tomb but is unconventional in that the tomb structure is at one end of the garden, rather than in the center. The huge complex includes an elaborate gate on the south and a handsome garden (about one thousand feet square) with water courses and pools. The mausoleum is on the north side, above the river on a raised terrace. On the west and east are two identical buildings—one a mosque and the other a guest house. All structures are contained within a high sandstone wall. Although the project is large and elaborate, it is organized so that on first view the observer's eyes are centered on the magnificent tomb building.

The organizer or master architect of this superb conception has long been a matter of controversy. A Spanish Augustinian friar who was in Agra for about a month in 1640 declared that the architect was a Venetian jeweler and silversmith named Geronimo Veroneo. Another architect named is Austin de Bordeaux, a French engineer and craftsman employed by Shāh Jahān, but his claim has been largely discounted. Persian manuscripts giving the history of the Tāj have been found to contain many discrepancies, but are said to agree that the chief designer was Ustād (master) Isa, assisted by his son Muhammad Sharif.[4] His place of origin has been variously recorded as Constantinople, Shiraz, and Agra. Austin de Bordeaux's name again appears as being responsible for the inlaid ornament, but this time he is called a French jeweler. This claim also has been refuted and the work is said to have been entrusted to a group of Hindu craftsmen from Multan and Kanauj.

Hermann Goetz makes an unusual observation about the character of the Tāj Mahal. He points out the reasons why it is of the purest Persian design, that it was created by two Persian architects, and yet is completely un-Persian—totally Indian, subdued and dreamy, the antithesis of the gaudy vitality of genuine Persian work.[5]

Thus one art historian in a single sentence describes the Tāj Mahal as being pure Persian design but completely un-Persian and thoroughly Indian in spirit. Other master architects and craftsmen have been named, but until the question is settled it might be well to consider generalities. There seems to be no doubt that an Indo-Muslim building, Humayūn's Tomb, was a source of inspiration for the structural design of the Tāj Mahal. Another building that probably influenced some of its ornament is the tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula. The entrance gate is certainly borrowed from Akbar's Bulwand Darwāza in Fatehpur Sīkrī. Thus it would seem that the Tāj was a logical outgrowth of an Indo-Muslim building tradition, whoever the designer. Of one thing we may be sure: many experts from far and near contributed to the Tāj Mahal, but it would not have been possible had it not been for the thousands of skilled Indian and Muslim artisans who did the work.

Seen in plate 482 is the entrance gate, a handsome construction of red sandstone inlaid with white marble and semiprecious stones, that rises one hundred feet in the air. Millions of people have looked through the main arch, spellbound by the view within, but the gate itself is a handsome structure.

483. Tāj Mahal, detail of entrance gate

The large arched alcove leads into an octagonal chamber, through which one passes to the arch on the

inner façade. On the east and west sides of the gate stairways lead to the upper stories and to the open balcony of the central arch.

484–85. Tāj Mahal, general views

The panoramic view of the mausoleum setting in plate 484 was taken from the top of the gate. Here we see the garden, the water courses, the reflection pool in the center, the mosque on the left with its white dome, the guest house on the right (a mirror image of the mosque) and the marble tomb, which seems to float in a dreamlike setting but still dominates the total scene. Handsome as the Tāj is, much of its beauty must be credited to this magnificent setting and the perfect harmony that exists among all the parts of the complex.

Much of the charm of the Tāj comes from the quality and texture of the marble from which it was made, a marble sensitive to changes in light conditions. To me it was most beautiful in late afternoon, just before sundown, when it picked up a warm tint that emphasized the graining and texture of the surface, giving it a warmth and glow not often associated with white marble. Another feature adding to the beauty of the Tāj is its solitary position. It would be difficult to imagine it silhouetted against a skyscraper or a Hindu temple. Muslim architects have long been concerned with the way their structures break the skyline, and for this one can be truly thankful.

486. Tāj Mahal, minaret

At the corners of the 313-foot square platform on which the Tāj stands are four identical minarets. This one, seen through an arch of the mosque, suggests the tactile quality of the marble blocks. They provide an interesting contrast to the smoothly finished texture of the mausoleum itself. The decorative panels of arches that ornament the face of the twenty-two-foot-high platform are kept in low relief. The four minarets are a necessary element in the design of the building. Not only do they add interest to the skyline, but they extend the building horizontally. They seem to suggest dignified and aloof sentinels standing guard over the tomb.

487–88. Tāj Mahal, façade details

Inside the domed alcove of each arch is a low-relief design consisting of diamond shapes formed by intersecting arcs. These add interest to what might have been a monotonous area, and the design tends to add to the upward sweep of the arch. The black inlaid script seen in plate 487 makes a handsome decorative band, with strong horizontal and vertical accents that provide an interesting contrast to the more open floral patterning of the inlaid semiprecious stones above the arch.

The smaller arched alcoves of plate 488 repeat the same decorative motifs as those of the four large central arches on each façade. Here, however, the door is a rectangle of conventional size, since the total arch design is not so far removed from the human scale. The plain wainscot panels that carry around the exterior of the building are clearly indicated. Their inlaid border design is a simple geometric pattern, in contrast to the floral inlay used as a border of the wainscot found inside the four large arches.

489. Tāj Mahal, detail of inlay

The inlay work of the Tāj Mahal, perhaps one of its most famous characteristics, is difficult to describe with words or photographs. So expert is the inlaying of the semiprecious stones that some of the joints are visible only under a microscope. Records indicate that more than forty varieties of stone were used and that they were supplied from markets throughout the eastern world. The infinite skill of the craftsmen, combined with the sensitivity of the architectural design and the superb use of ornament, produces a harmony that is reflected throughout the total building.

490. Tāj Mahal, detail of domes

This plate, showing one of the small domes and part of the large one, is more or less self-explanatory. The handsome border designs, the slender decorative quoin with its crownlike top, the contrast of the small dome with the swelling form of the large dome, the angularity of the vertical façades, and the utilitarian water spouts are expertly resolved in a symphony of visual harmony. It is interesting to note that scholars point out the Indian character of the small dome and the Persian design of the large one as an example of a perfect blending of two different traditions.[6]

491. Moti Masjid, Red Fort, Delhi (c. 1662)

With Aurangzeb's ascent to the throne, the great Moghul building period was over. Aurangzeb, a devout Muslim, seems to have inherited little of his family's interest in producing great buildings. Moreover, Shāh Jahān's tremendous building programs had practically bankrupted the treasury, so it is possible that Aurangzeb could not have engaged in a building program even if he had wanted to. One example of architecture ordered by the new ruler is included here to round out the imperial style of the great Moghul period. It is the small private mosque in the Red Fort (Shāhjahānabad) called Moti Masjid and is one of the better examples built in Aurangzeb's reign. An important part of the original plans for Shāhjahānabad was the great mosque outside the walls of the fort. Aurangzeb wanted a closer mosque where he could worship several times a day, so one of his earliest buildings was this structure.

The first point to observe is that the mosque seems crowded into its space. The domes seem out of scale for the building: they are too bulbous and have overemphasized finials. On the other hand the mosque has excellent craftsmanship and the marble is not only the finest quality but is also beautifully finished. The curved overhang above the central arch is unusual and interesting. The mosque is shown here through an arch in the Diwāni-Khās.

492. Moti Masjid, exterior detail

The superb quality of the marble and its beautiful sheen, the precision of the ribbing on the domes, and the skillful work in the inlaid design are clearly evident in this plate. This building, more than later ones, carries on much of Shāh Jahān's building tradition.

493. Moti Masjid, front façade

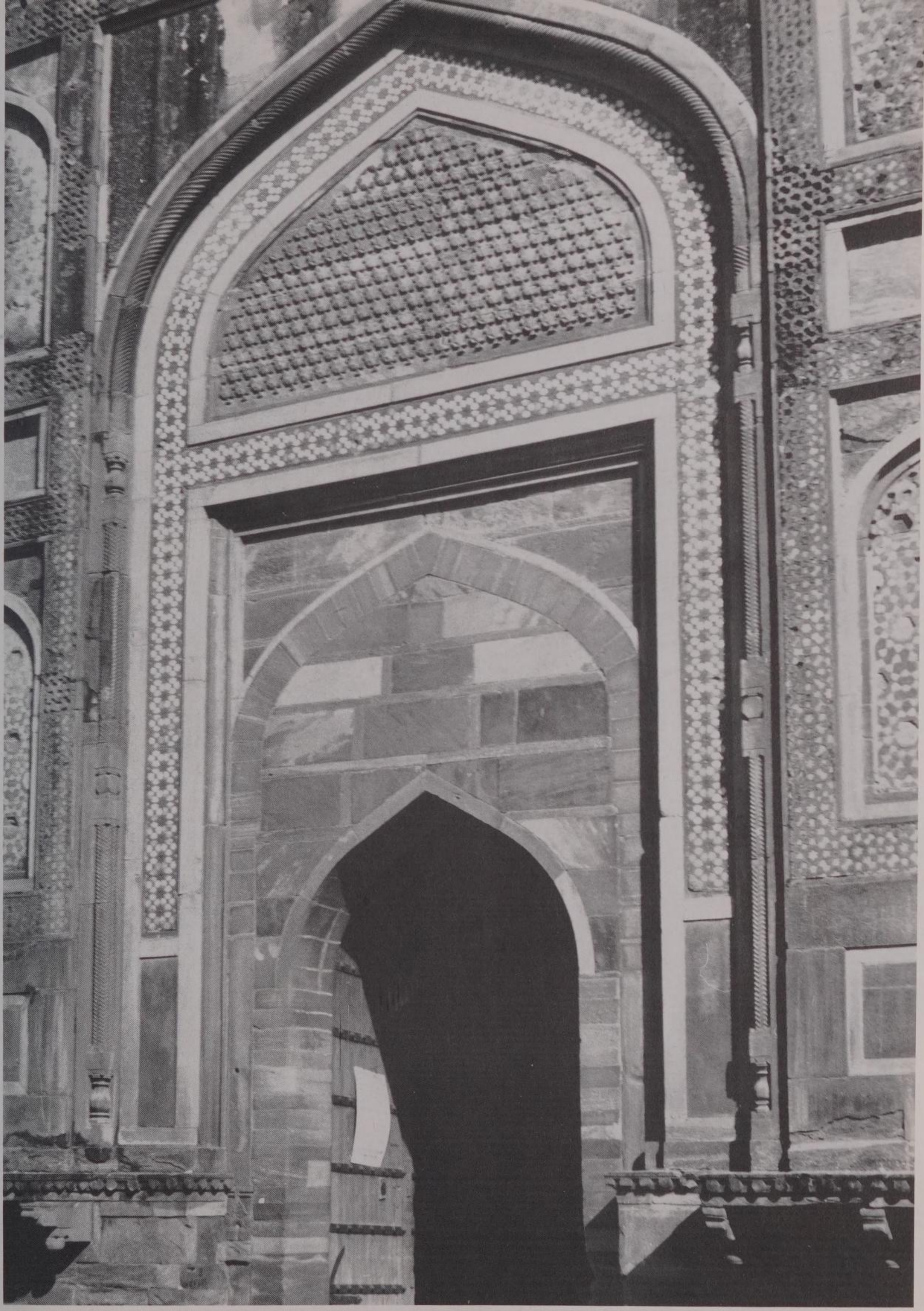
The front façade of the mosque has three arches, two side ones of equal size and a larger center one. The front of the building is pleasing in design but needs more space.

494–95. Moti Masjid, interior details

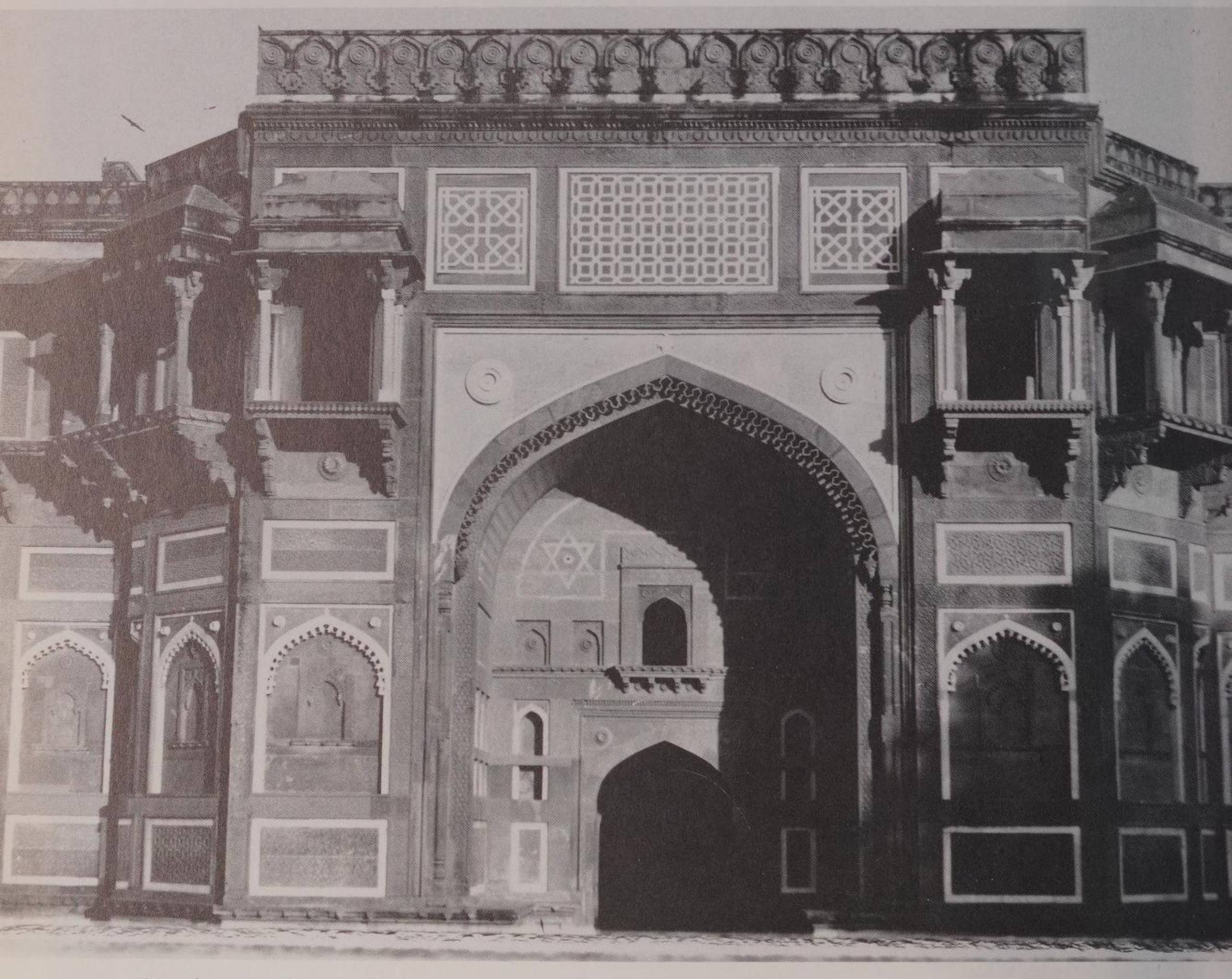
These plates indicate that floral carving is the dominant type of interior ornament. There are, however, plain panels bordered by straight incised lines making a band around the lower part of the walls, as well as on the shaft of the large pillar. The design of the upper wall has an abundance of curved floral ornament. An excessive use of curved lines tends to weaken a composition. It is unfortunate that a philosophy of "less is more" was not applied here, but in spite of this the Moti Masjid has a pleasing, elegant interior.

401. Agra Fort, exterior walls, Agra

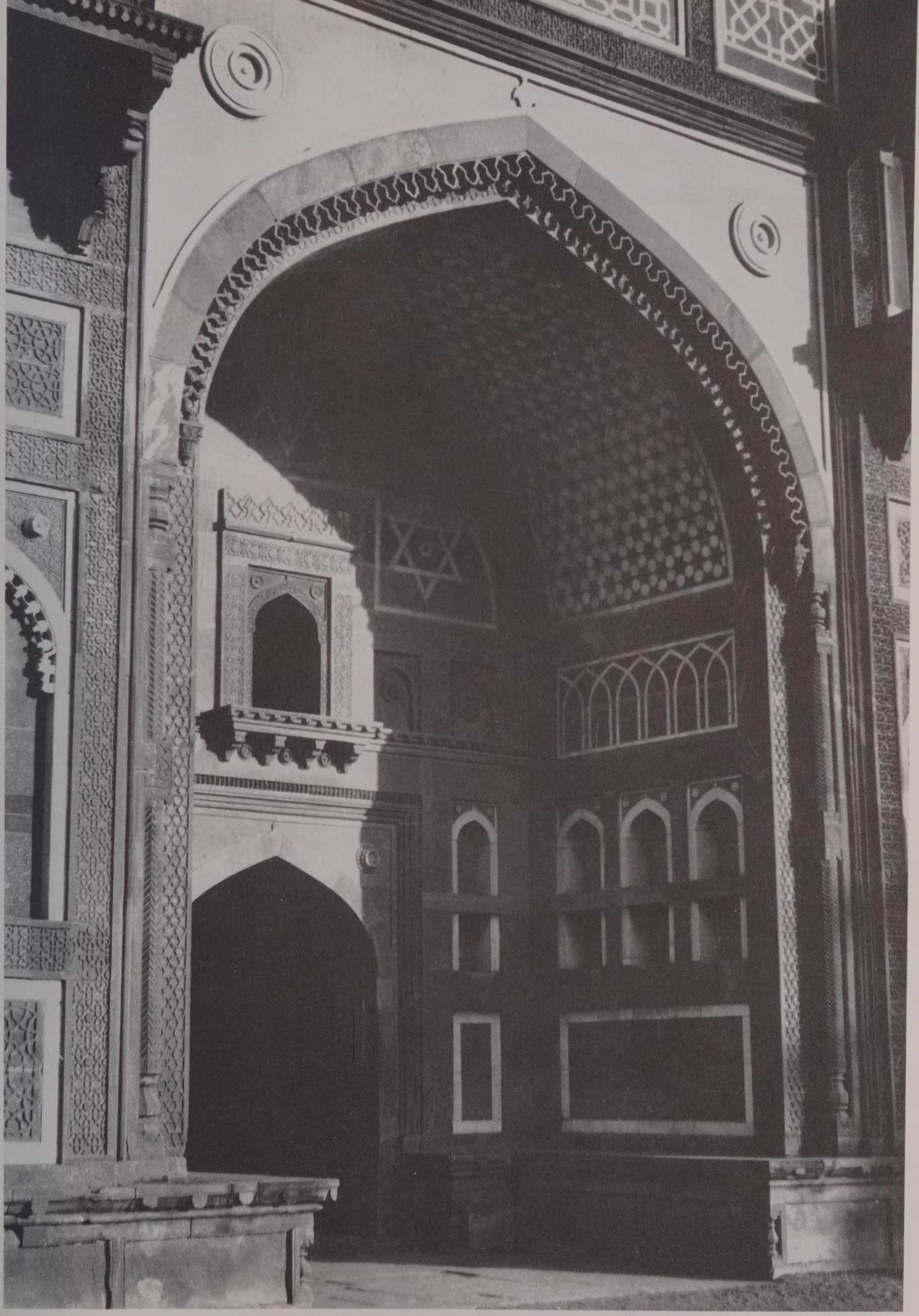
402. Amar Singh Gate, Agra Fort



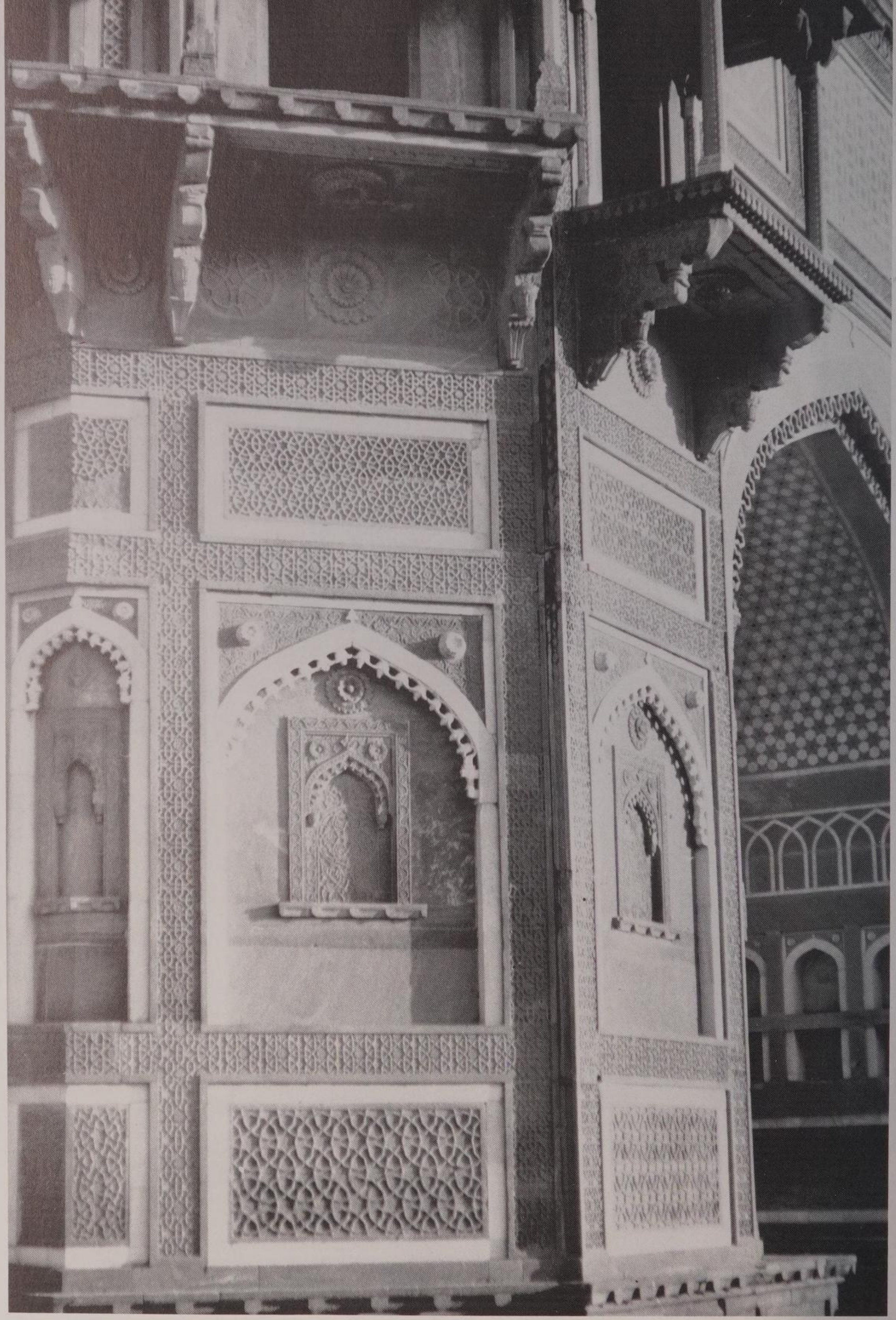
403. Amar Singh Gate, arch detail



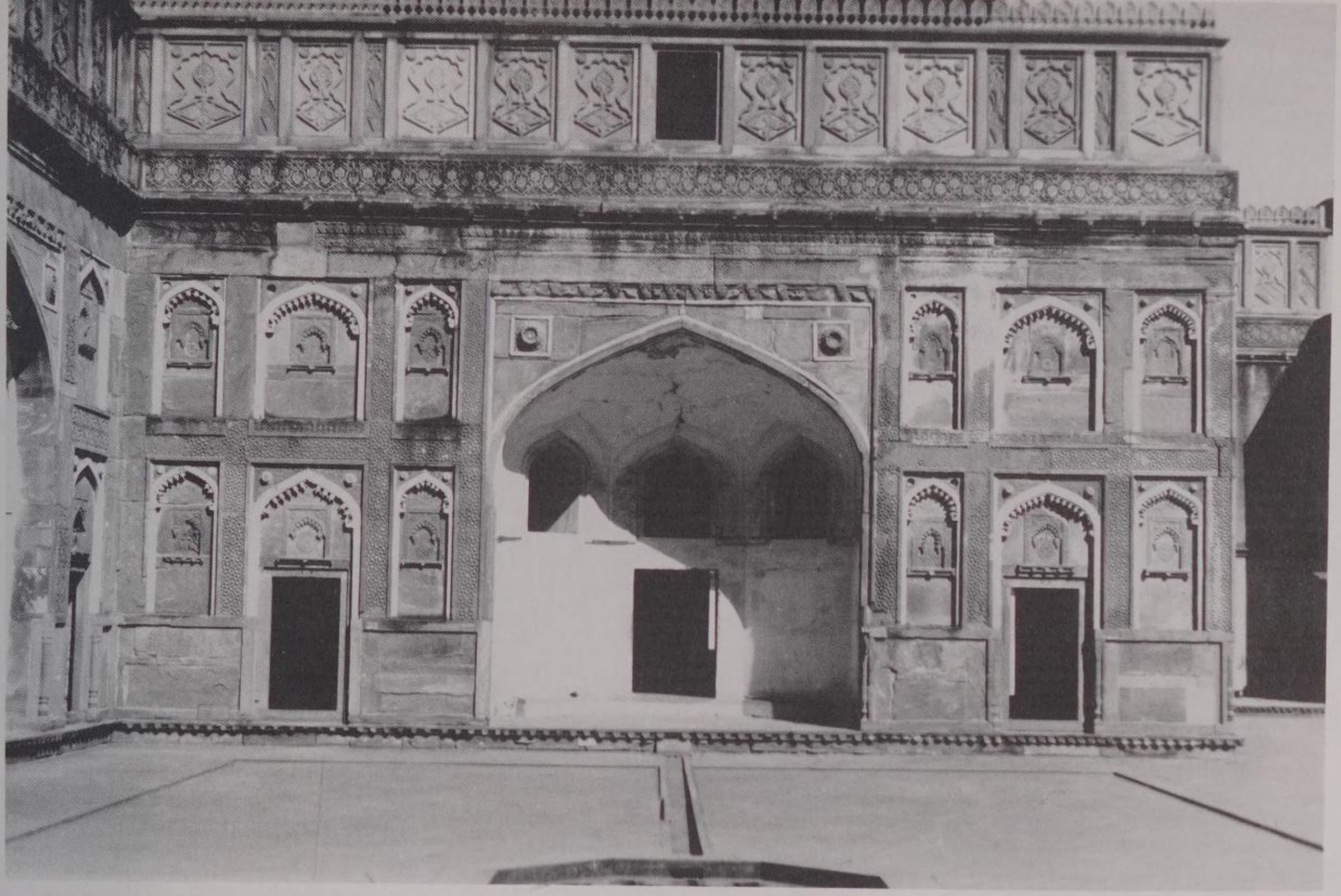
404. Jahāngīrī Mahal, Agra Fort



405. Jahāngīrī Mahal, arch detail



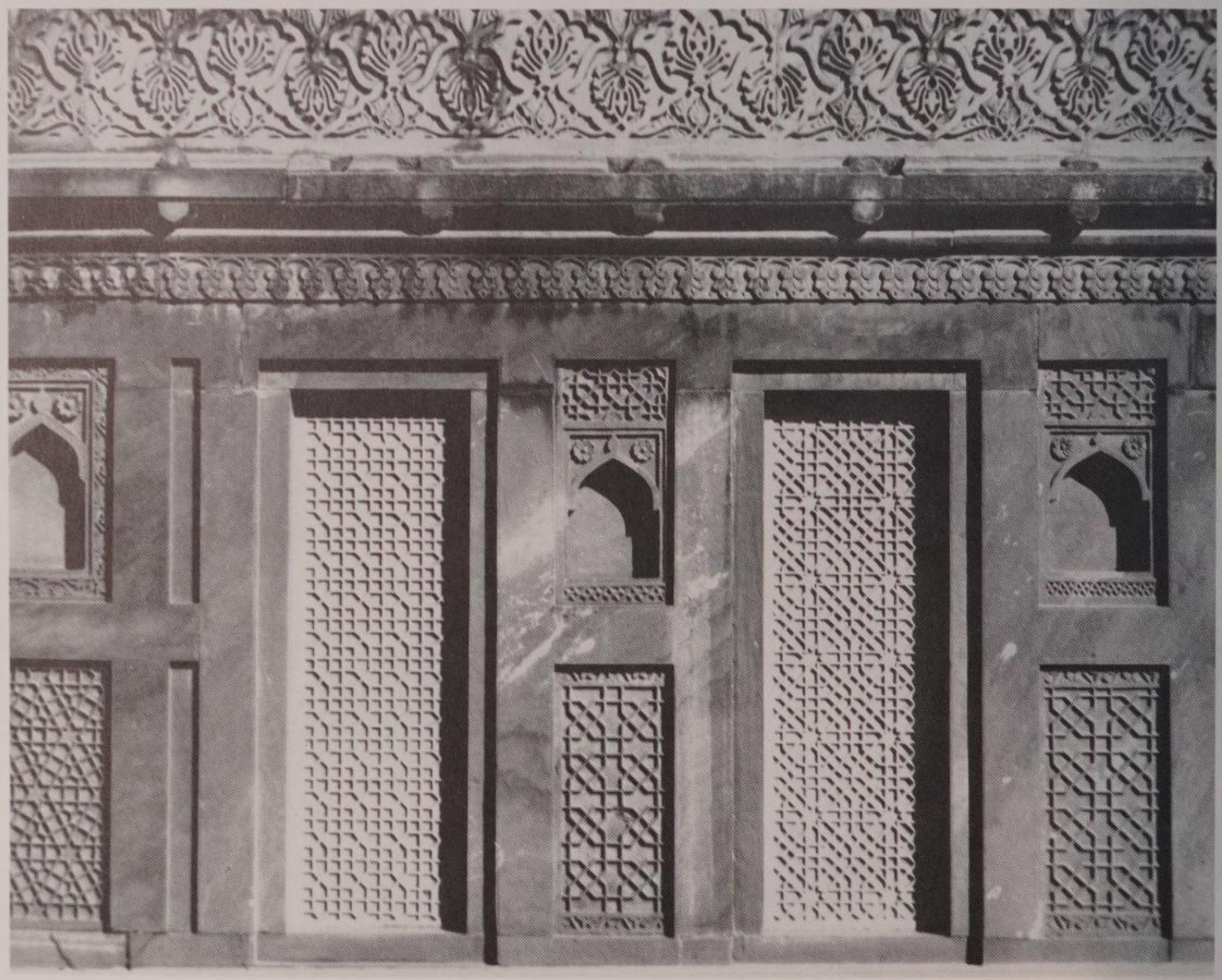
406. Jahāngīrī Mahal, detail of niche



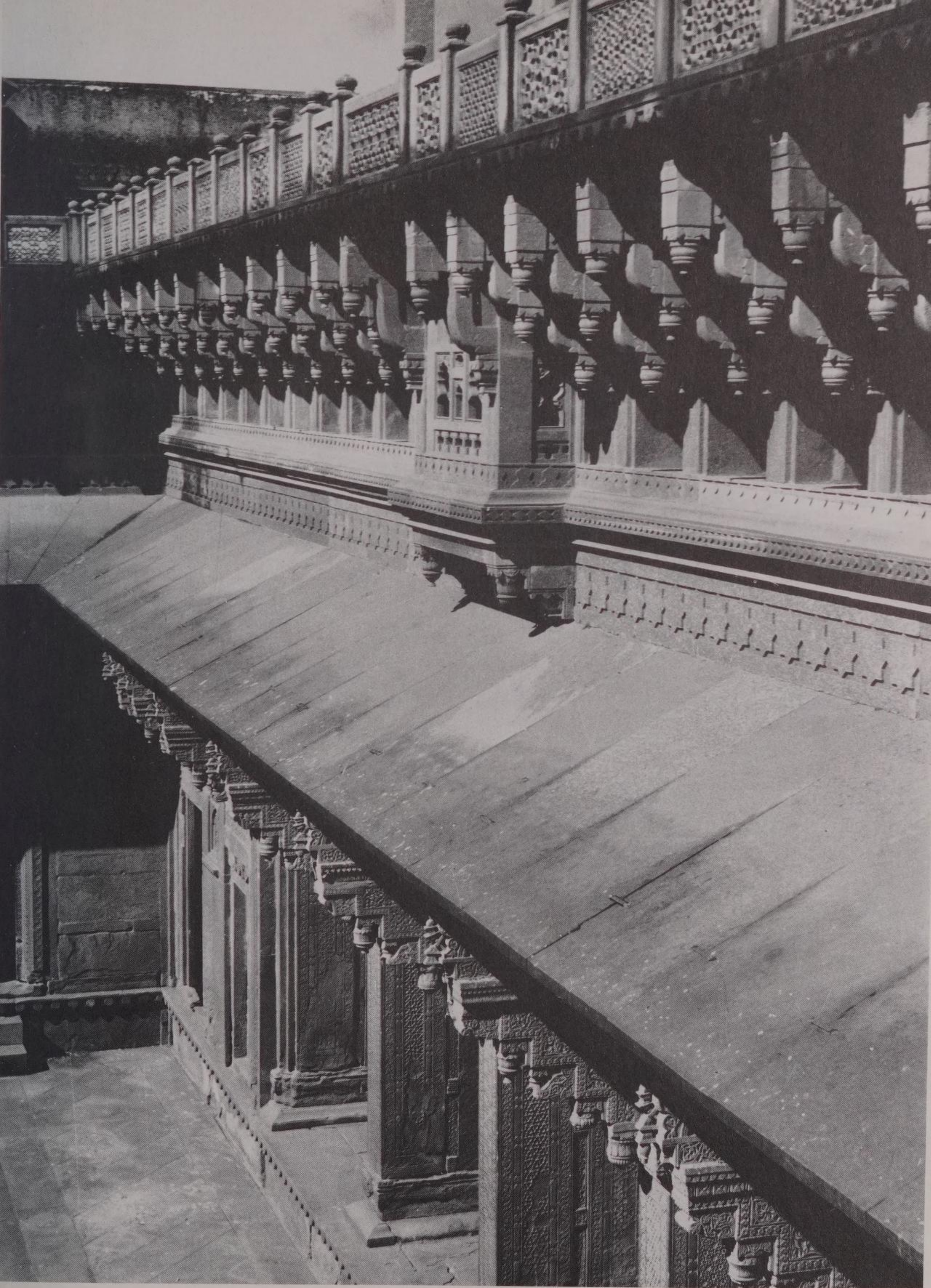
407. Jahāngīrī Mahal, inner court

408. Jahāngīrī Mahal, inner court, detail

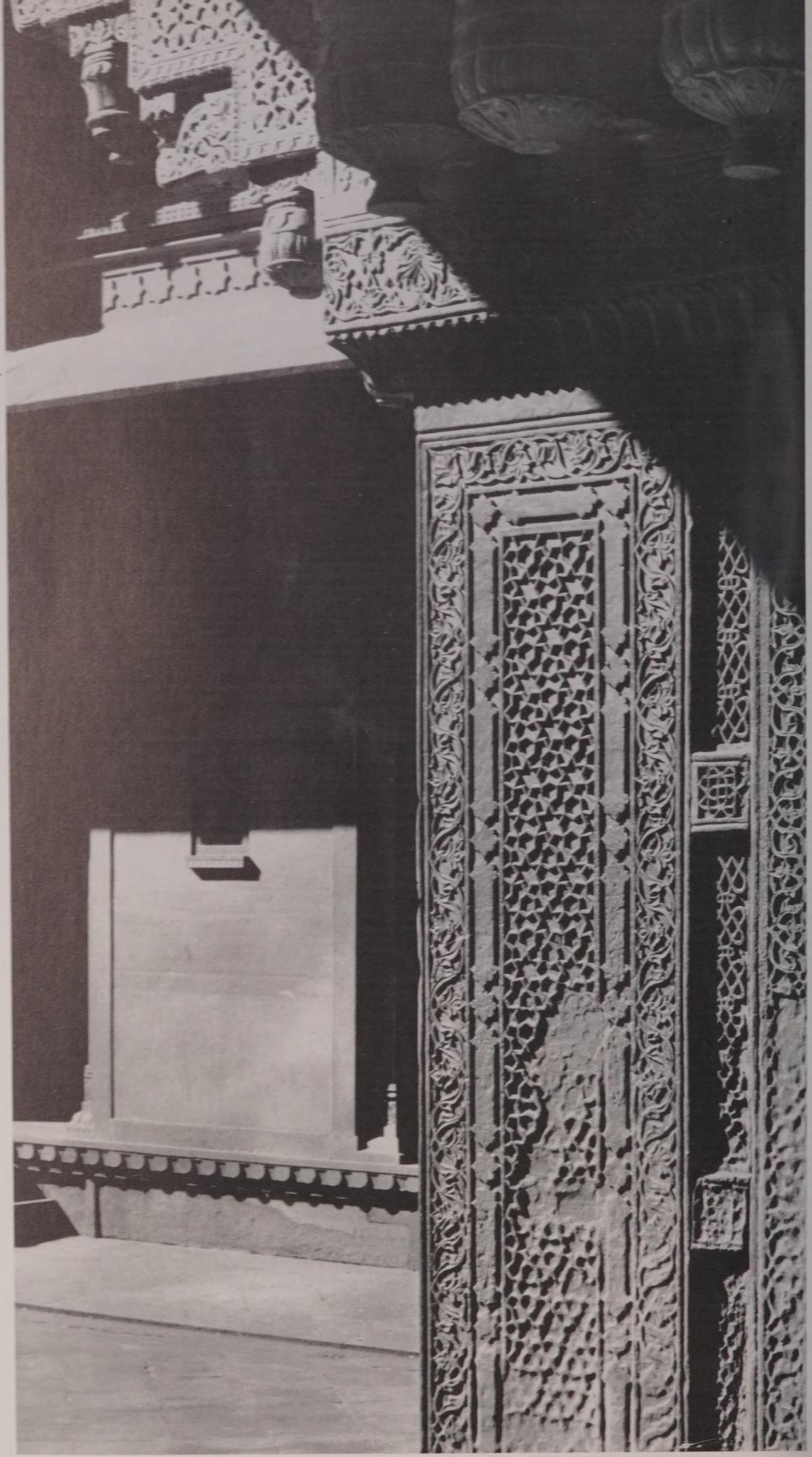
409. Jahāngīrī Mahal, wall detail



410. Jahāngīrī Mahal, wall detail



411. Jahāngīrī Mahal, interior court detail

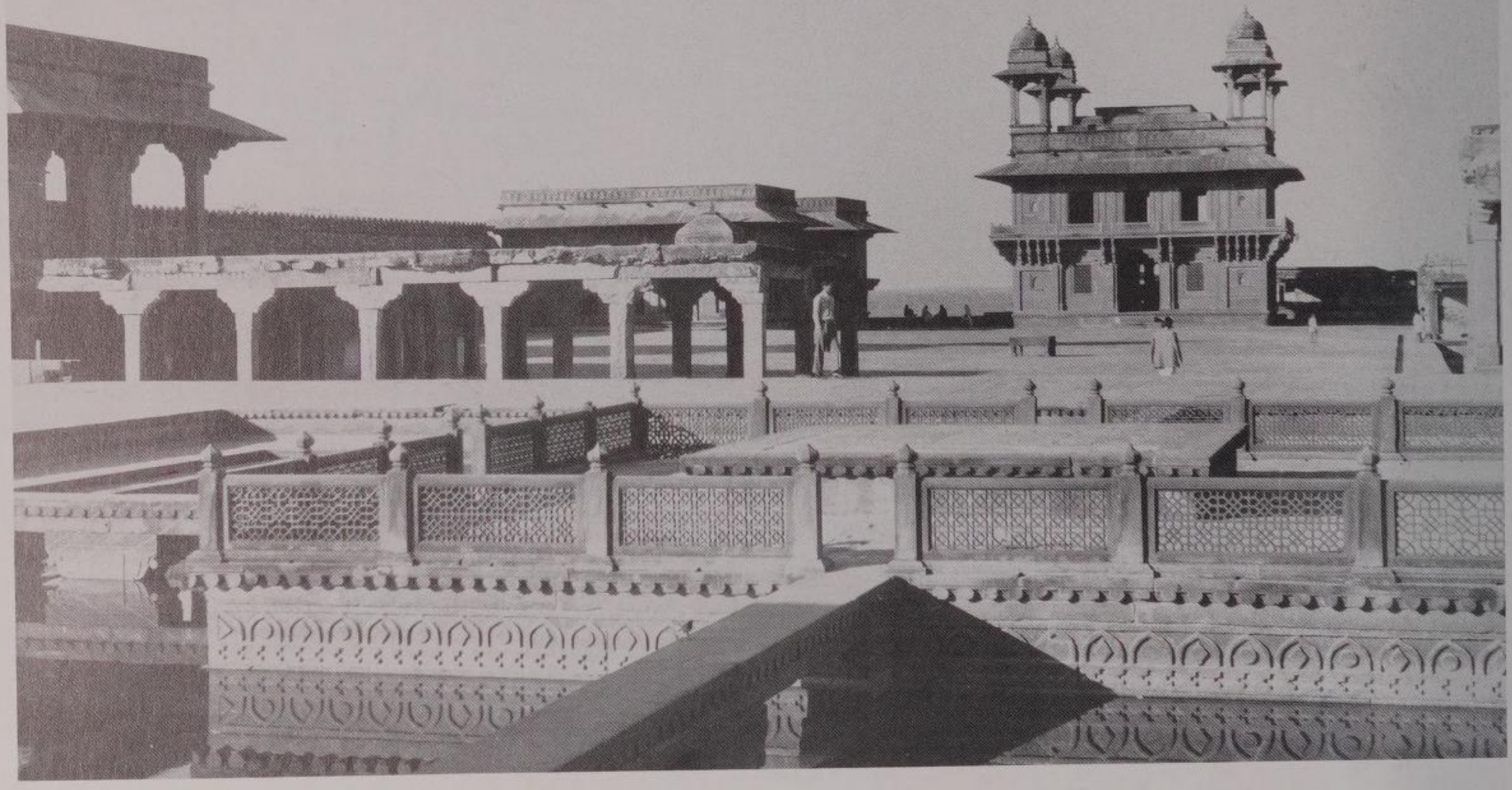


412. Jahāngīrī Mahal, pillar and bracket detail

413. Jahāngīrī Mahal, kiosk detail

414. Jahāngīrī Mahal, kiosk detail

415. Jahāngīrī Mahal, kiosk detail

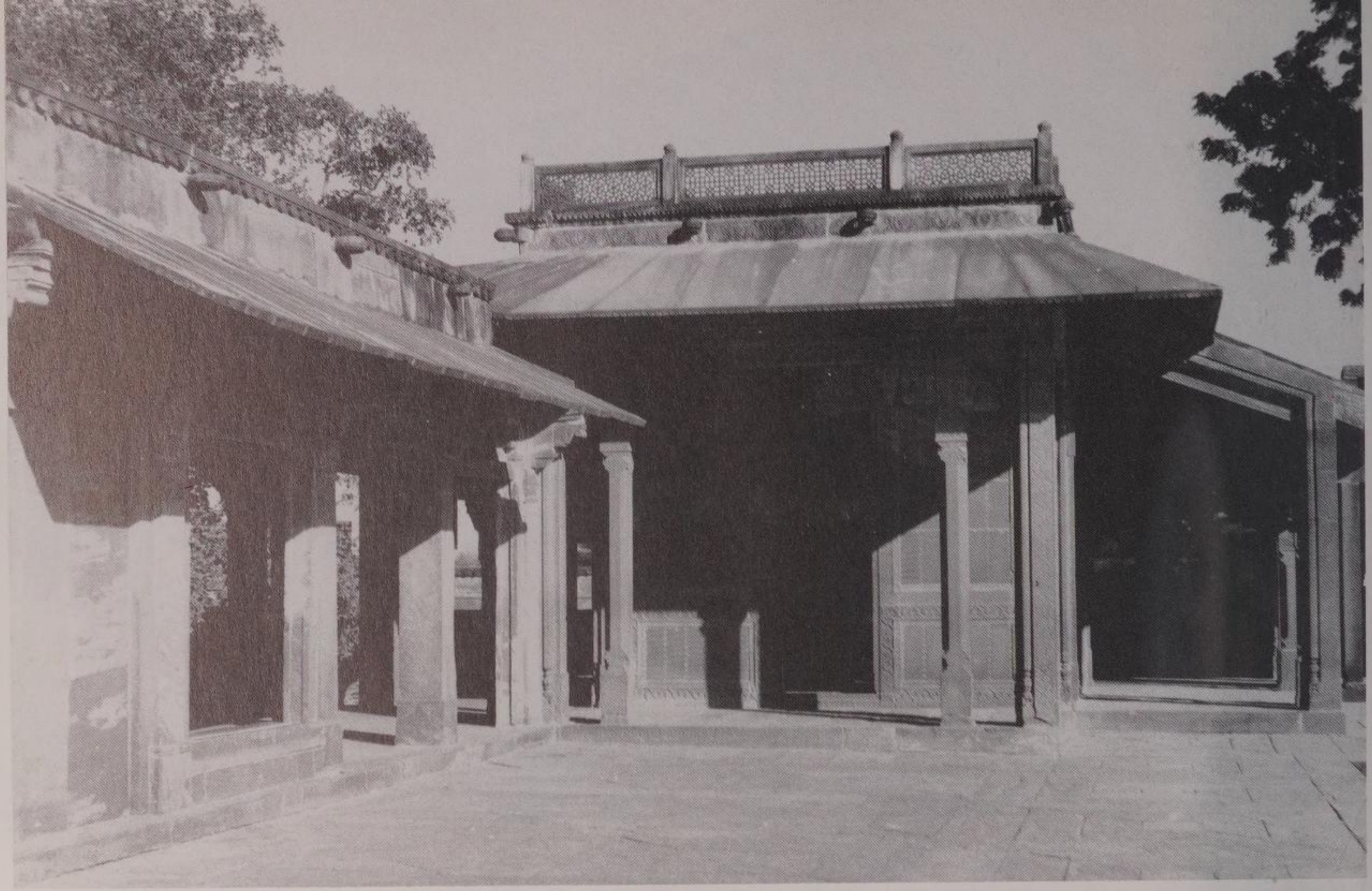


416. Fatehpur Sīkrī, general view

417. Fatehpur Sīkrī, general view

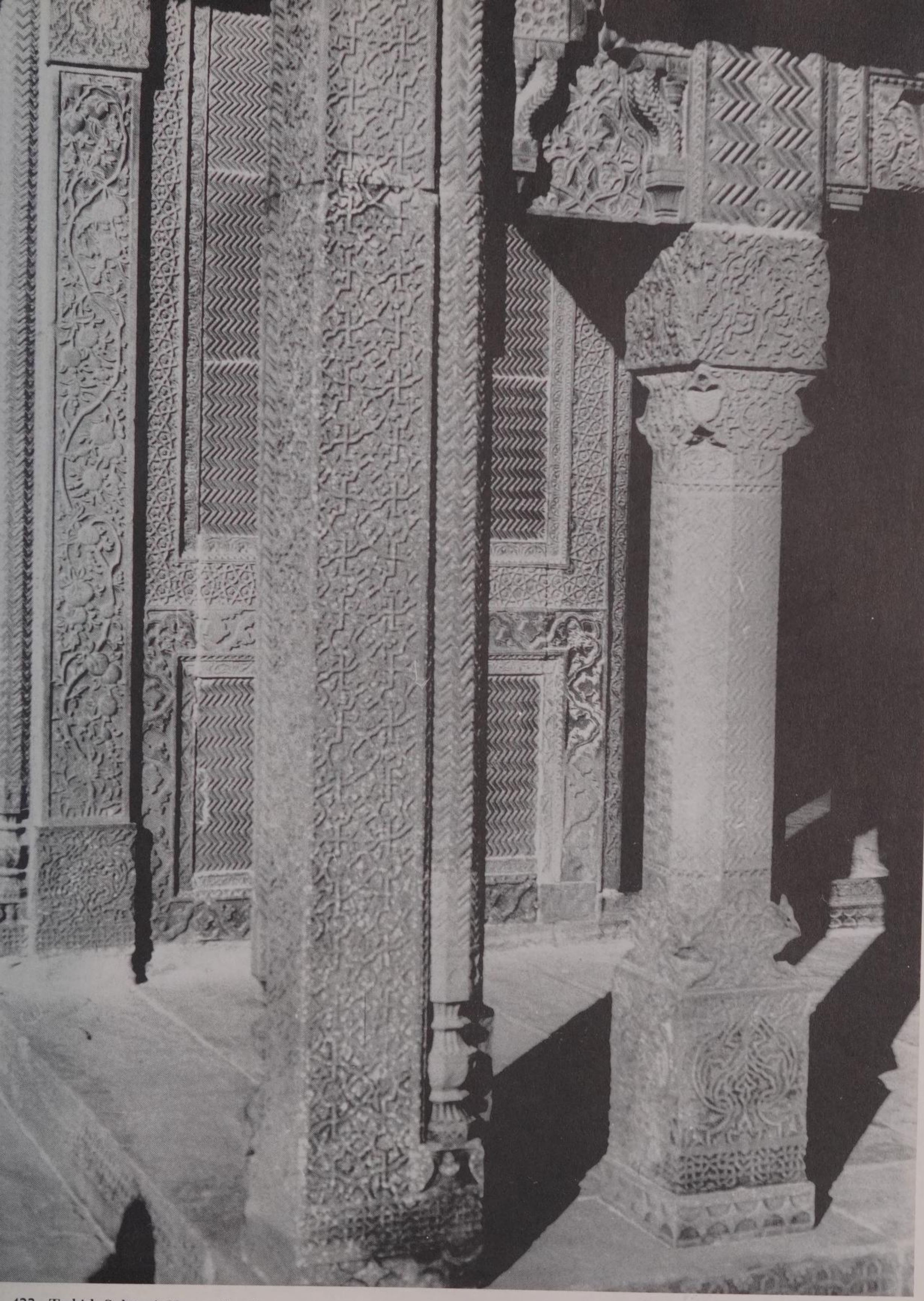
418. Fatehpur Sīkrī, colonnaded corridor

419. Fatehpur Sīkrī, colonnaded corridor

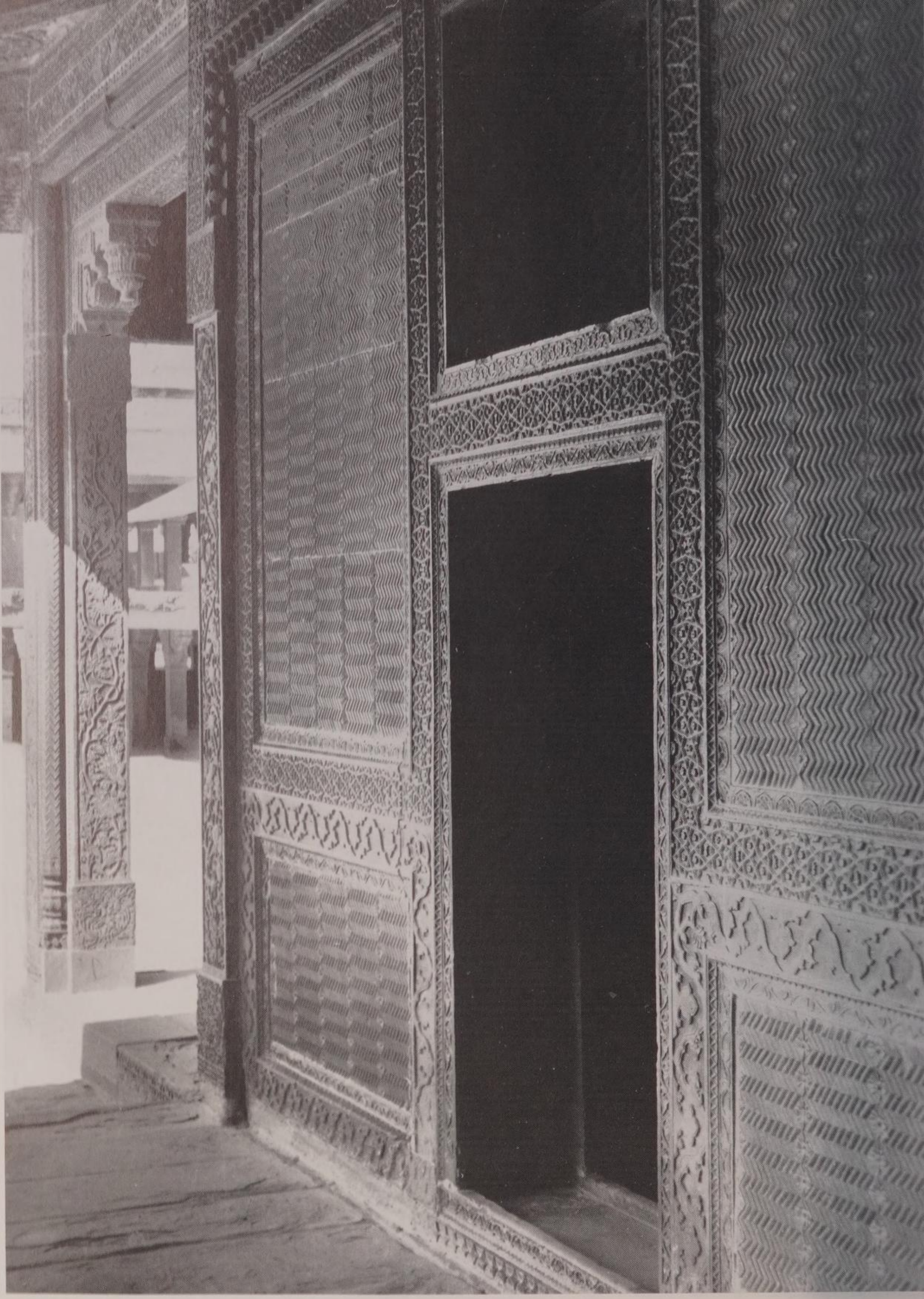


420. Turkish Sultāna's House, Fatehpur Sīkrī

421. Turkish Sultāna's House, Fatehpur Sīkrī

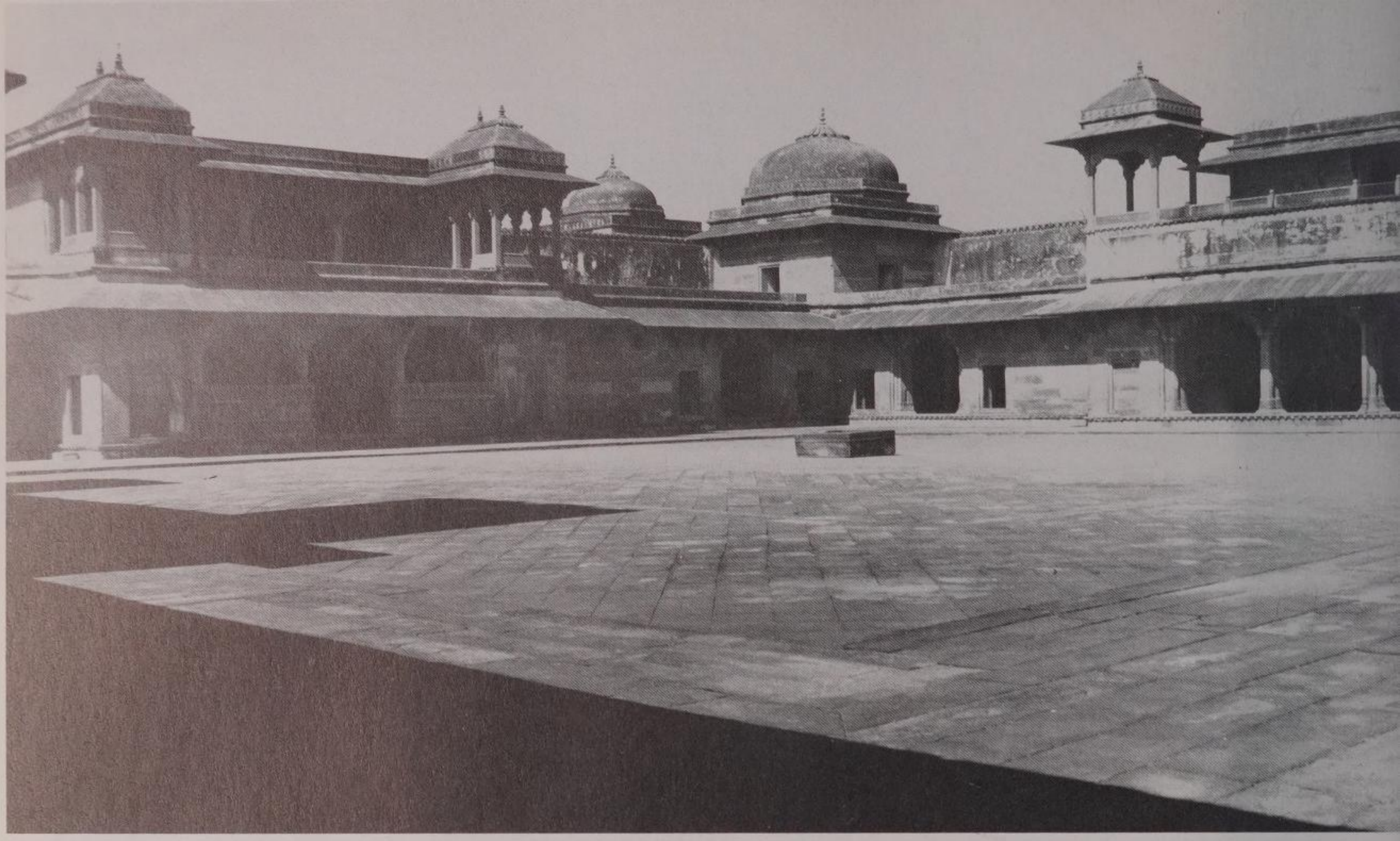


422. Turkish Sultāna's House, detail

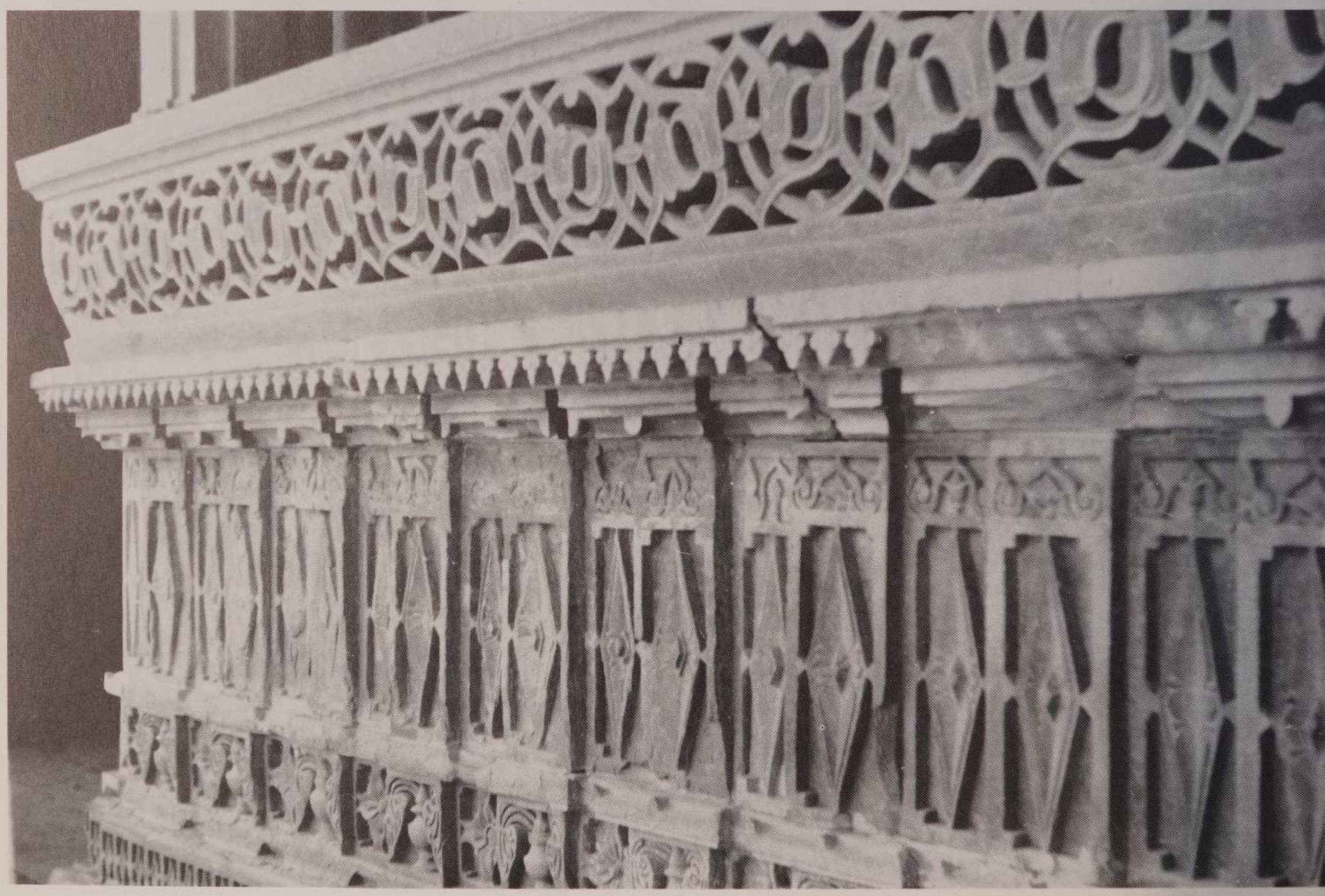


423. Turkish Sultāna's House, detail

424. Jodh Bai's Palace, entrance, Fatehpur Sīkrī



425. Jodh Bai's Palace

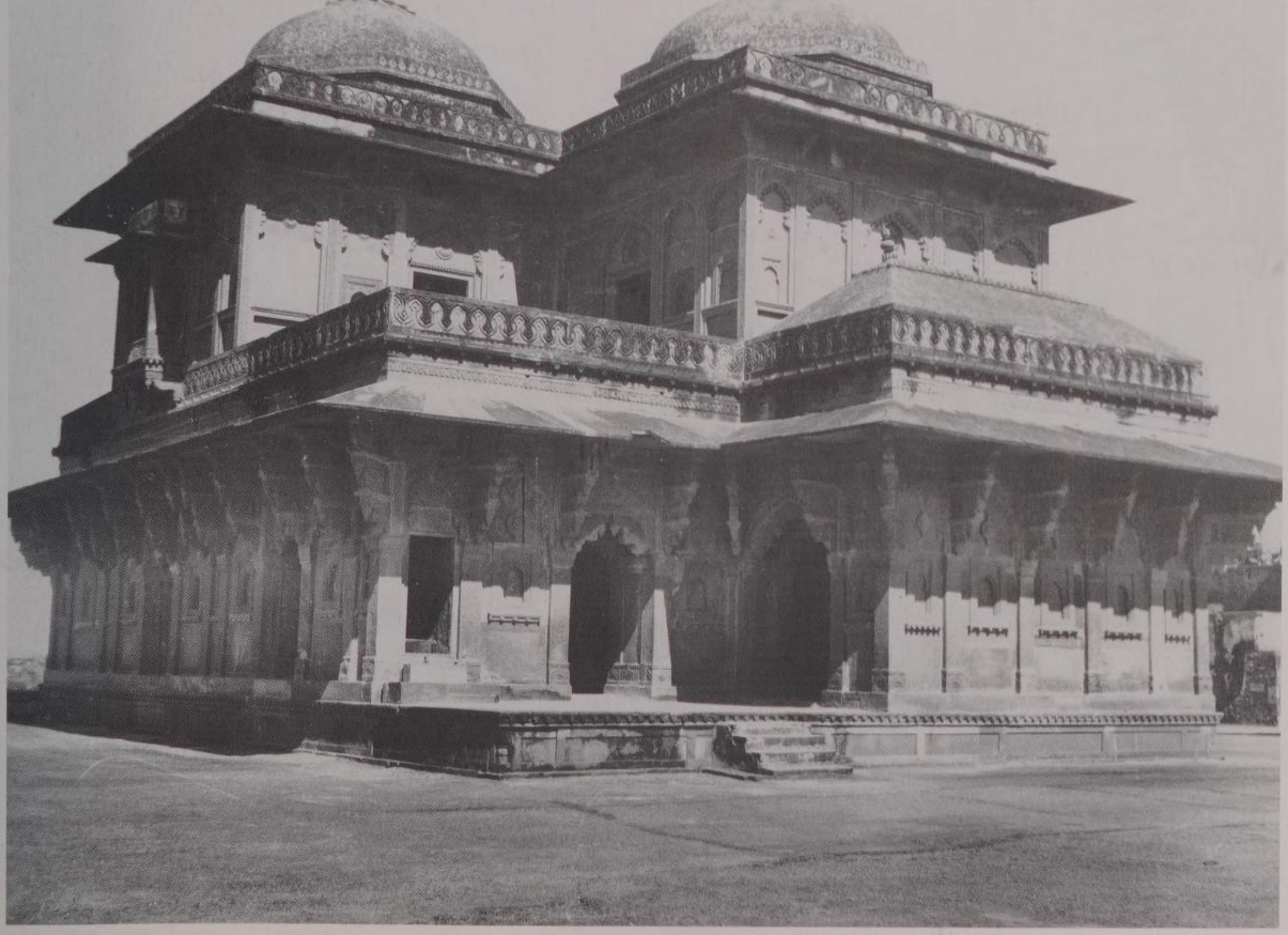


426. Jodh Bai's Palace, detail

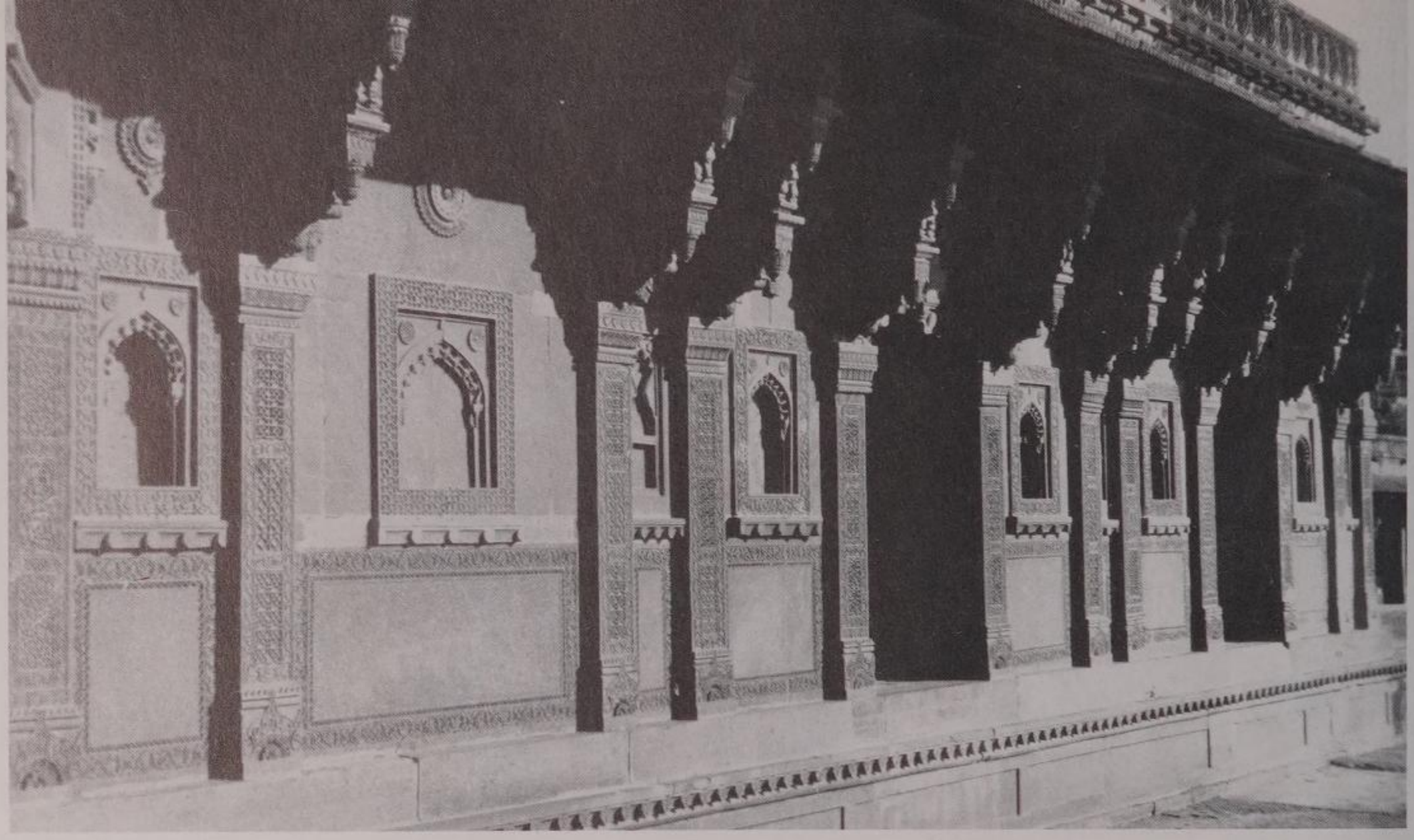
427. Jodh Bai's Palace, pillar detail

428. Jodh Bai's Palace, interior detail

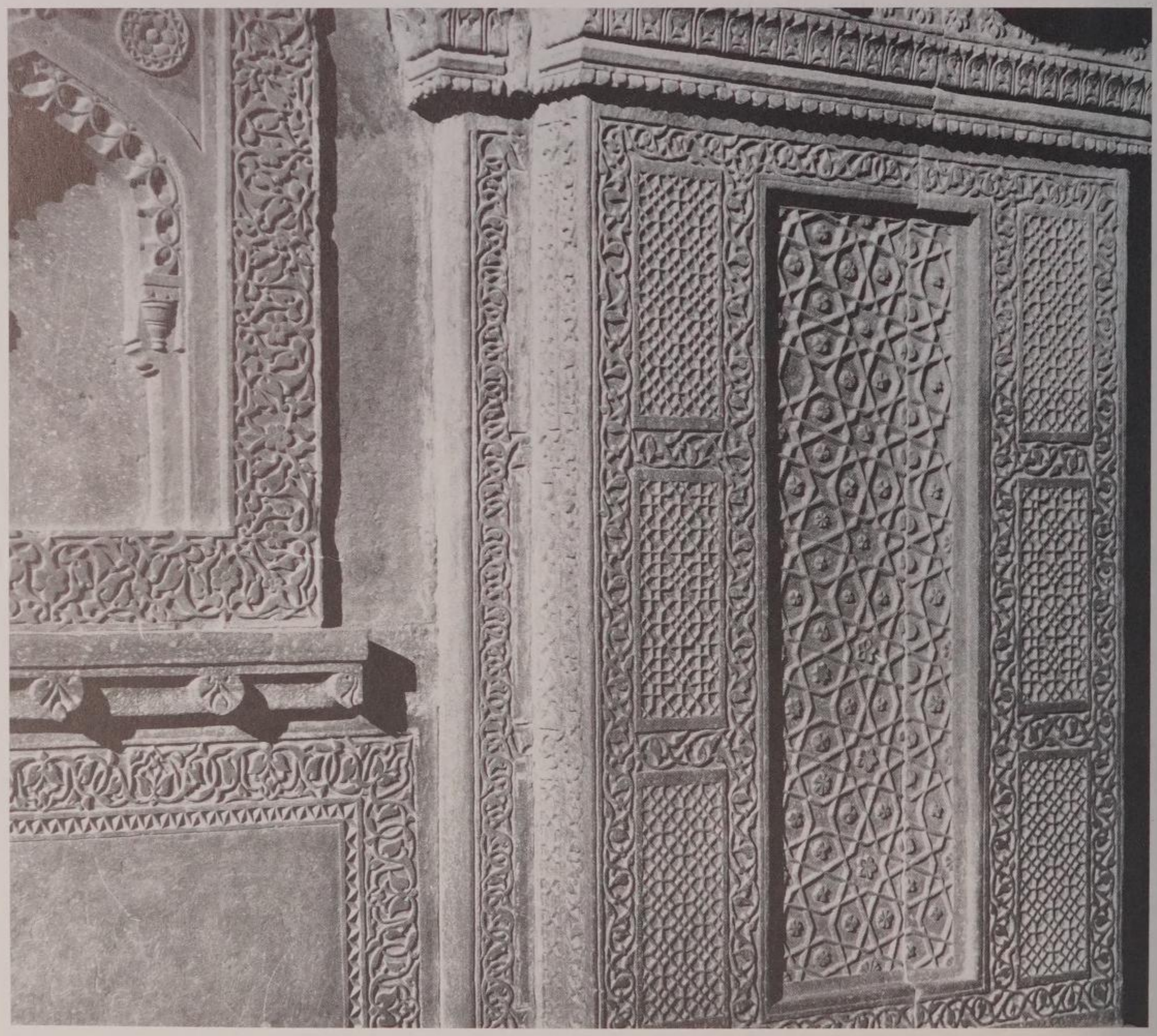
429. Miriam's House, Fatehpur Sīkrī



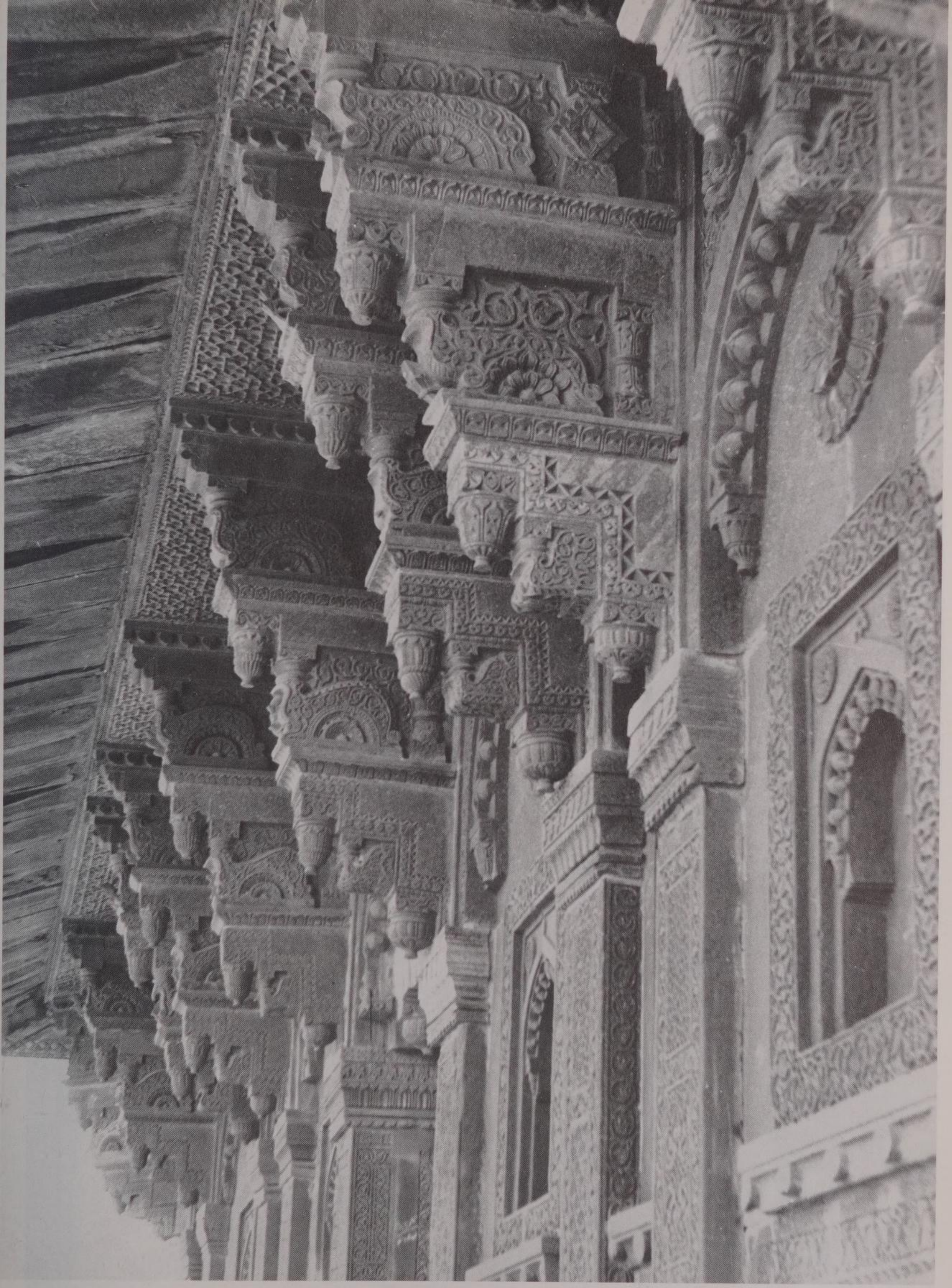
430. Rāja Bīrbal's House, Fatehpur Sīkrī



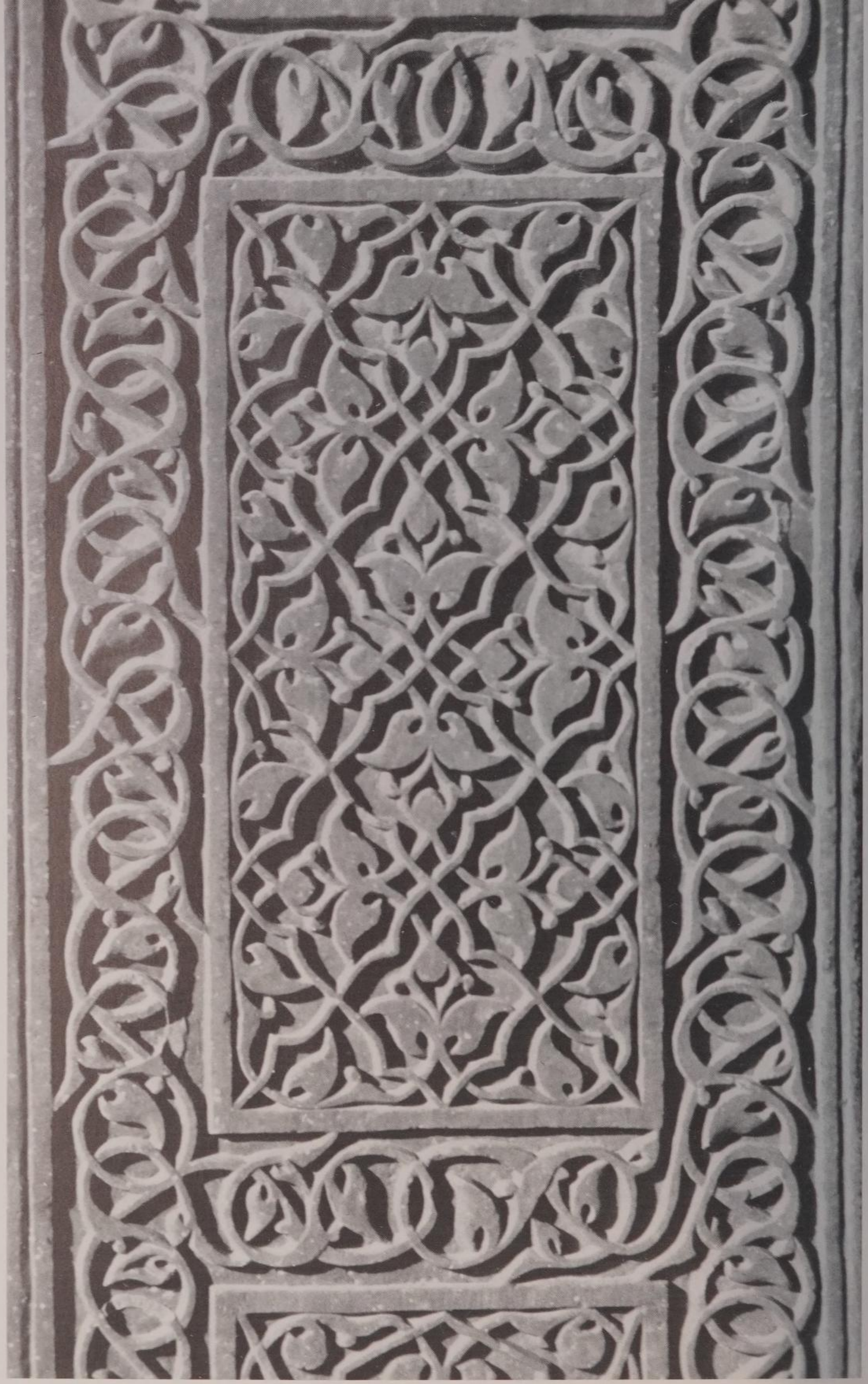
431. Rāja Bīrbal's House, detail



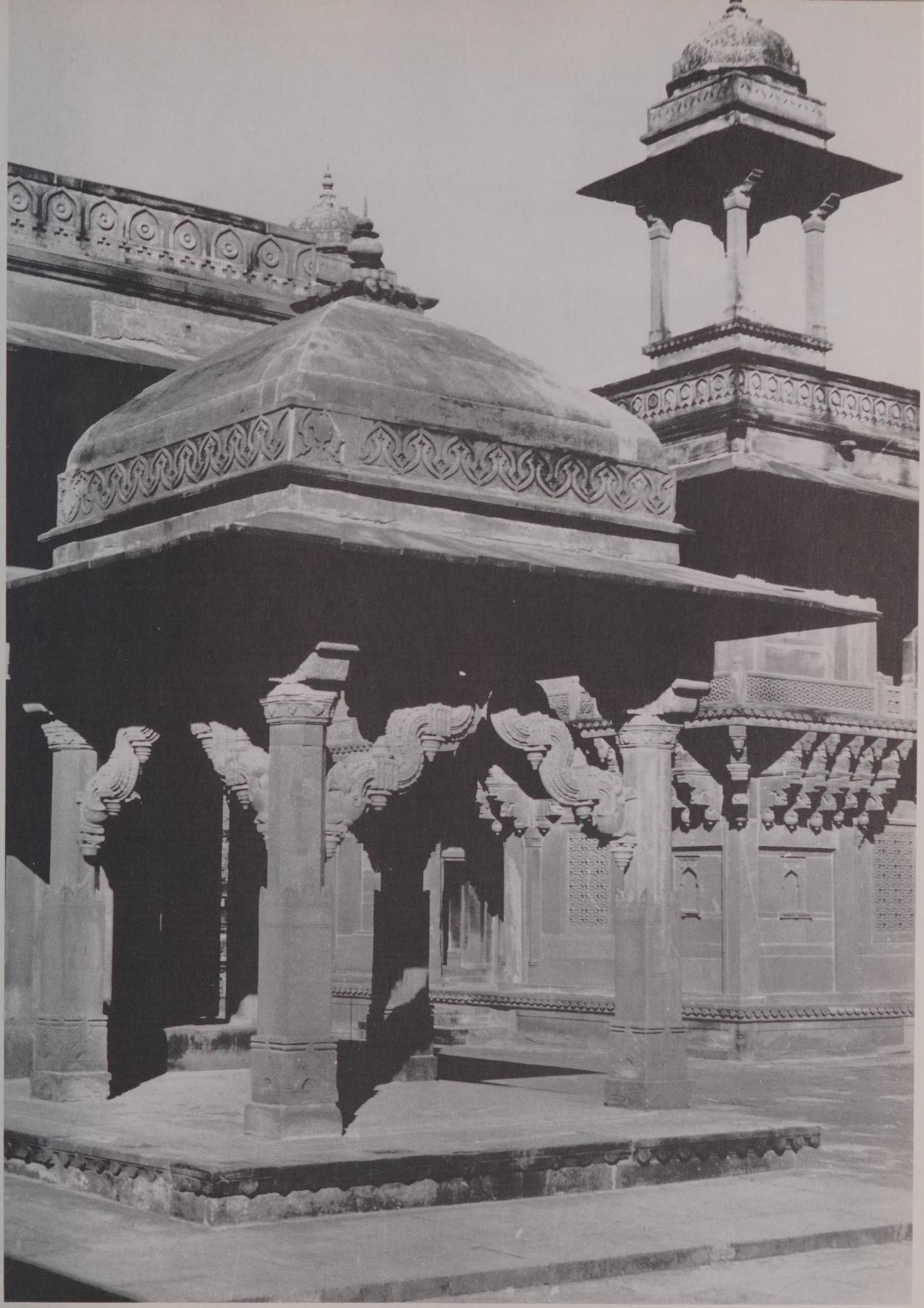
432. Rāja Bīrbal's House, detail



433. Rāja Bīrbal's House, detail



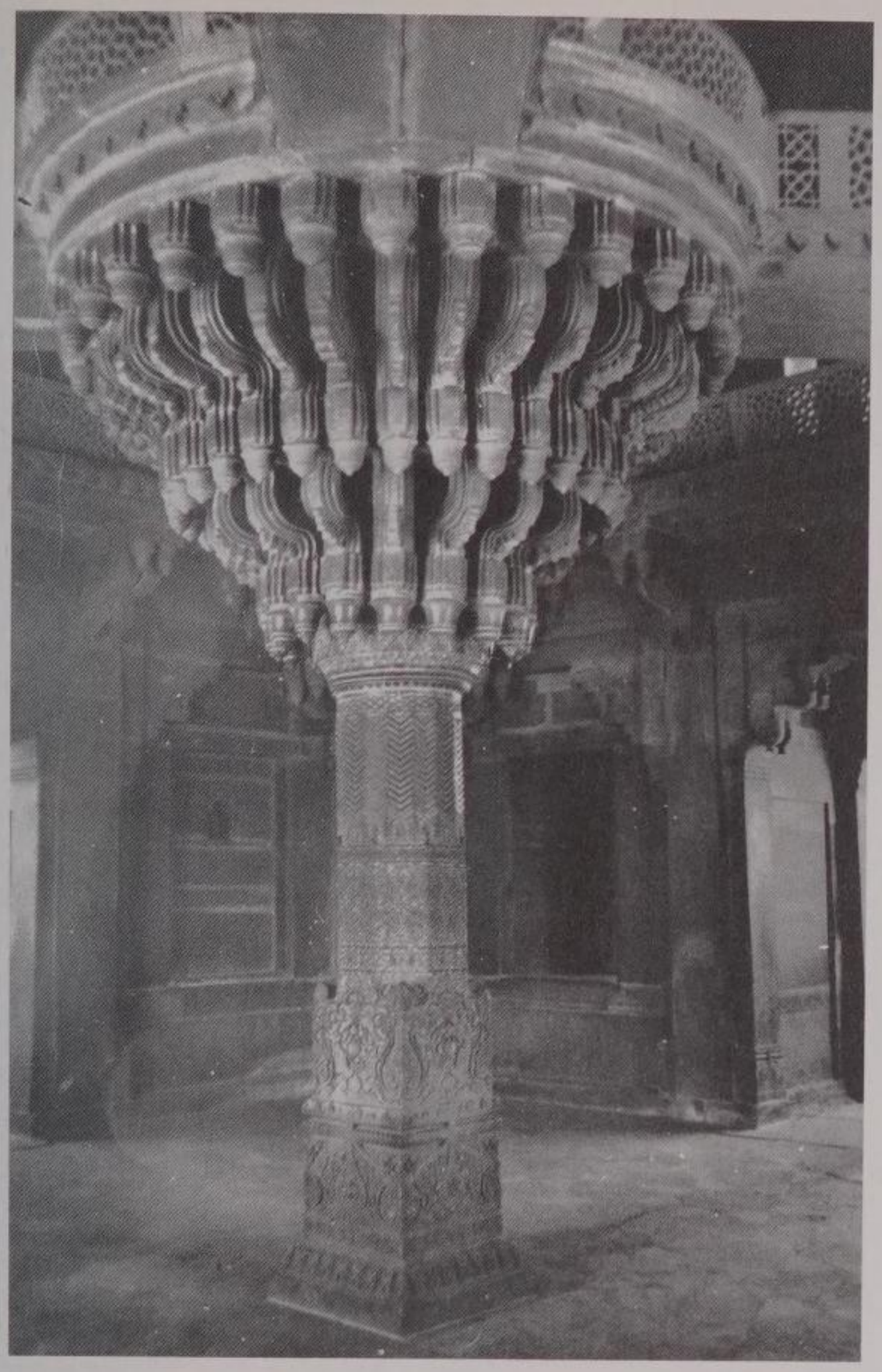
434. Rāja Bīrbal's House, detail



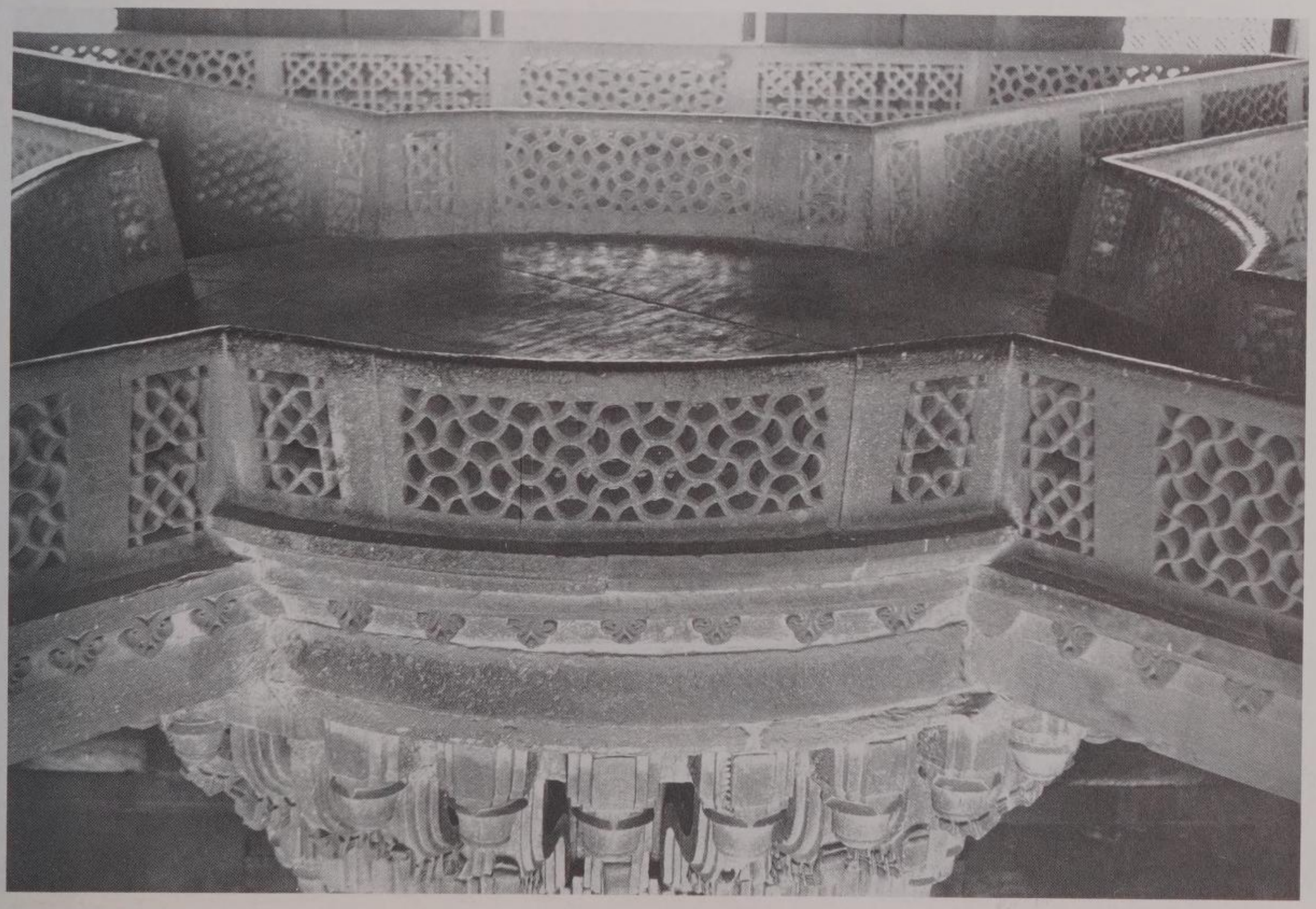
435. Astrologer's seat, Fatehpur Sīkrī

436. Diwāni-Khās, Fatehpur Sīkrī

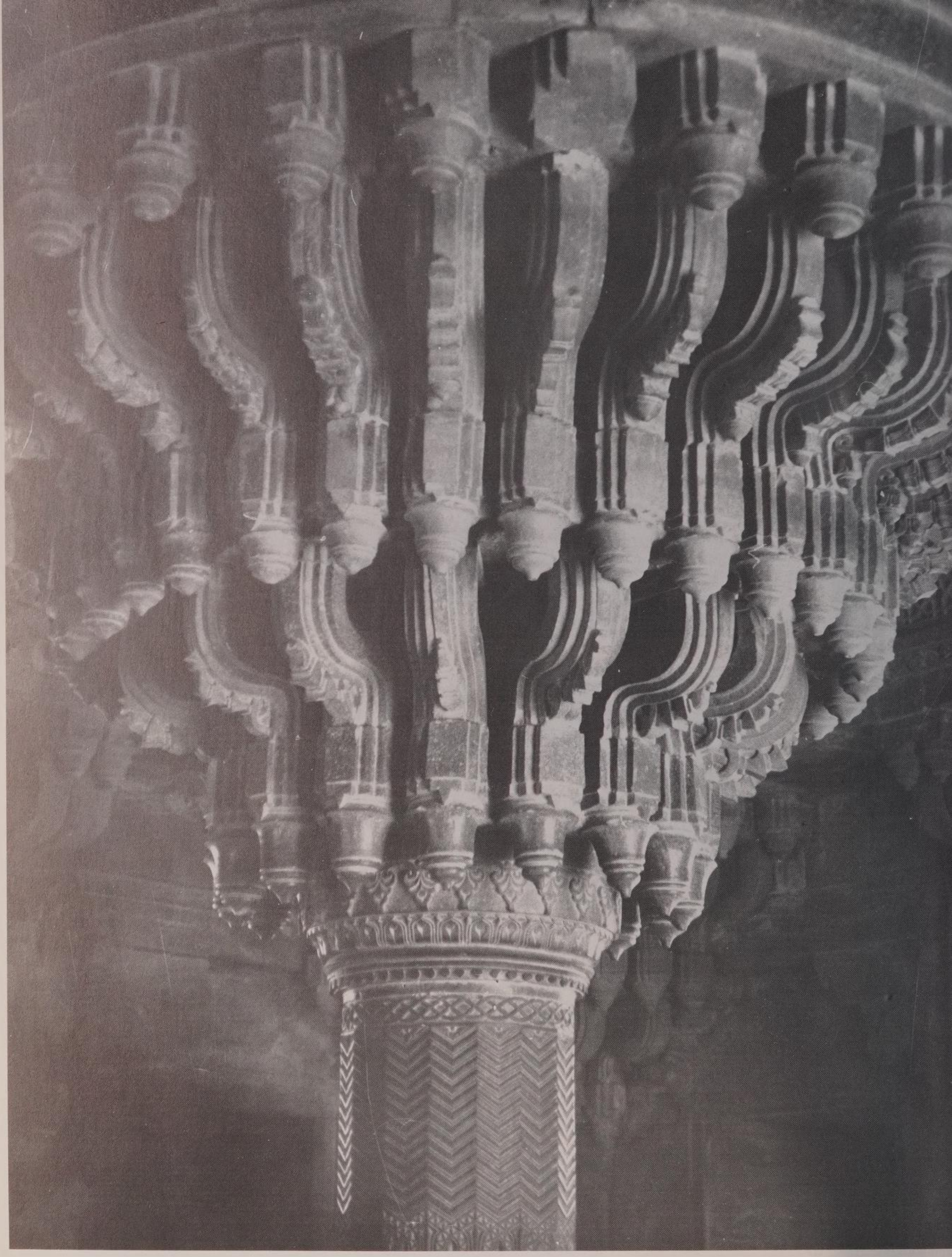
437. Diwāni-Khās, bracket detail



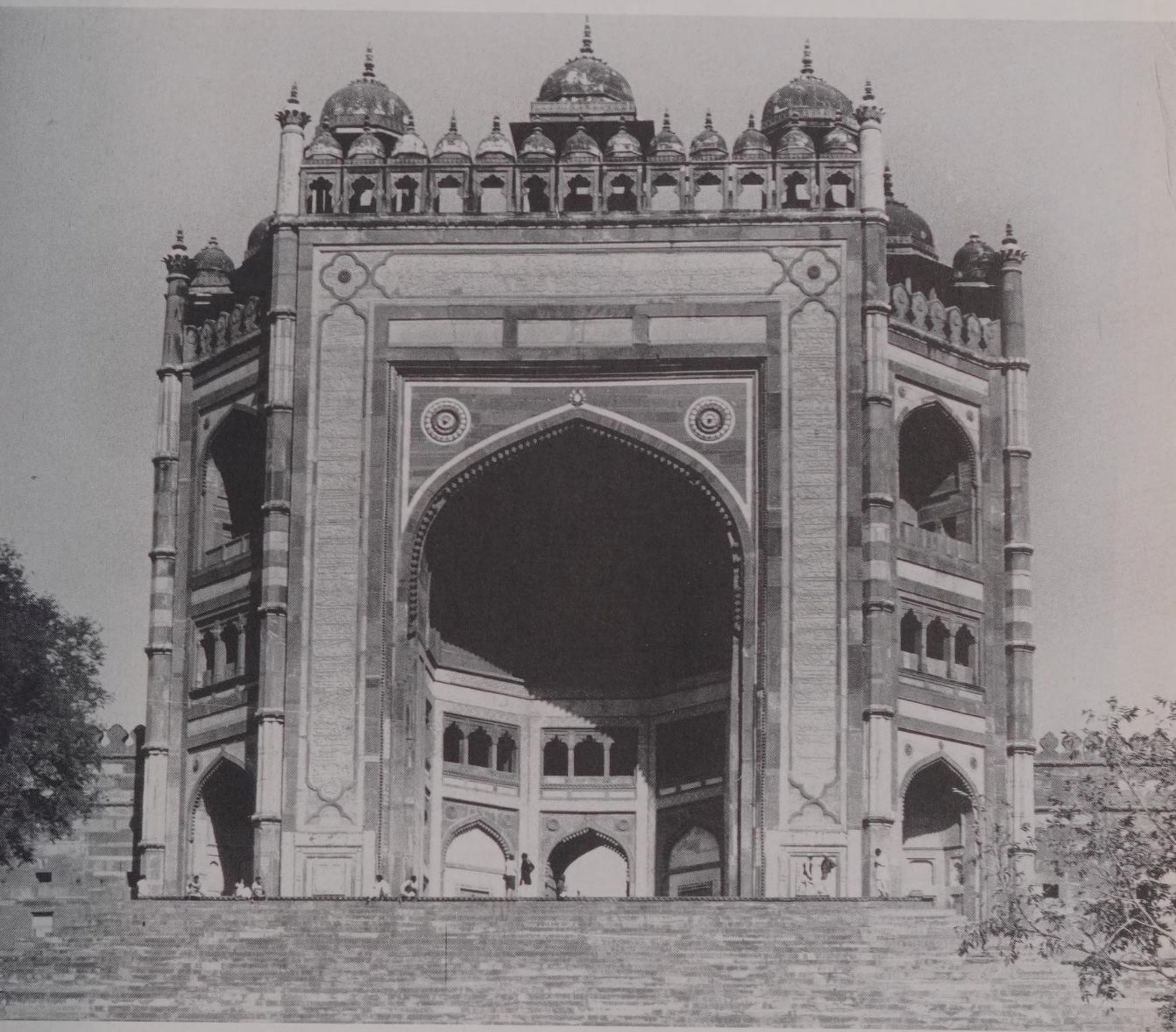
438. Diwāni-Khās, interior detail



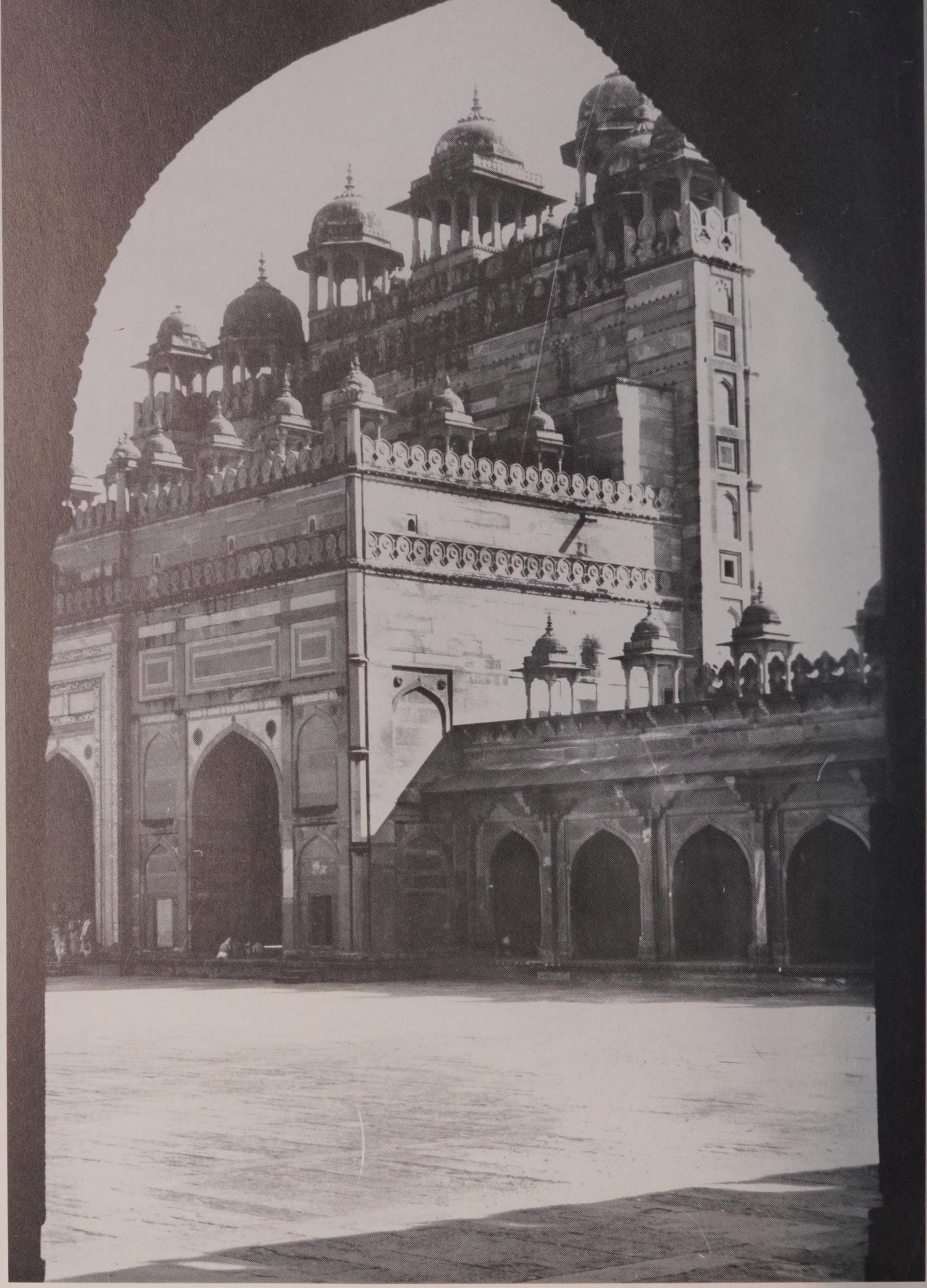
439. Diwāni-Khās, interior detail



440. Diwāni-Khās, interior detail



441. Bulwānd Darwāza, Fatehpur Sīkrī

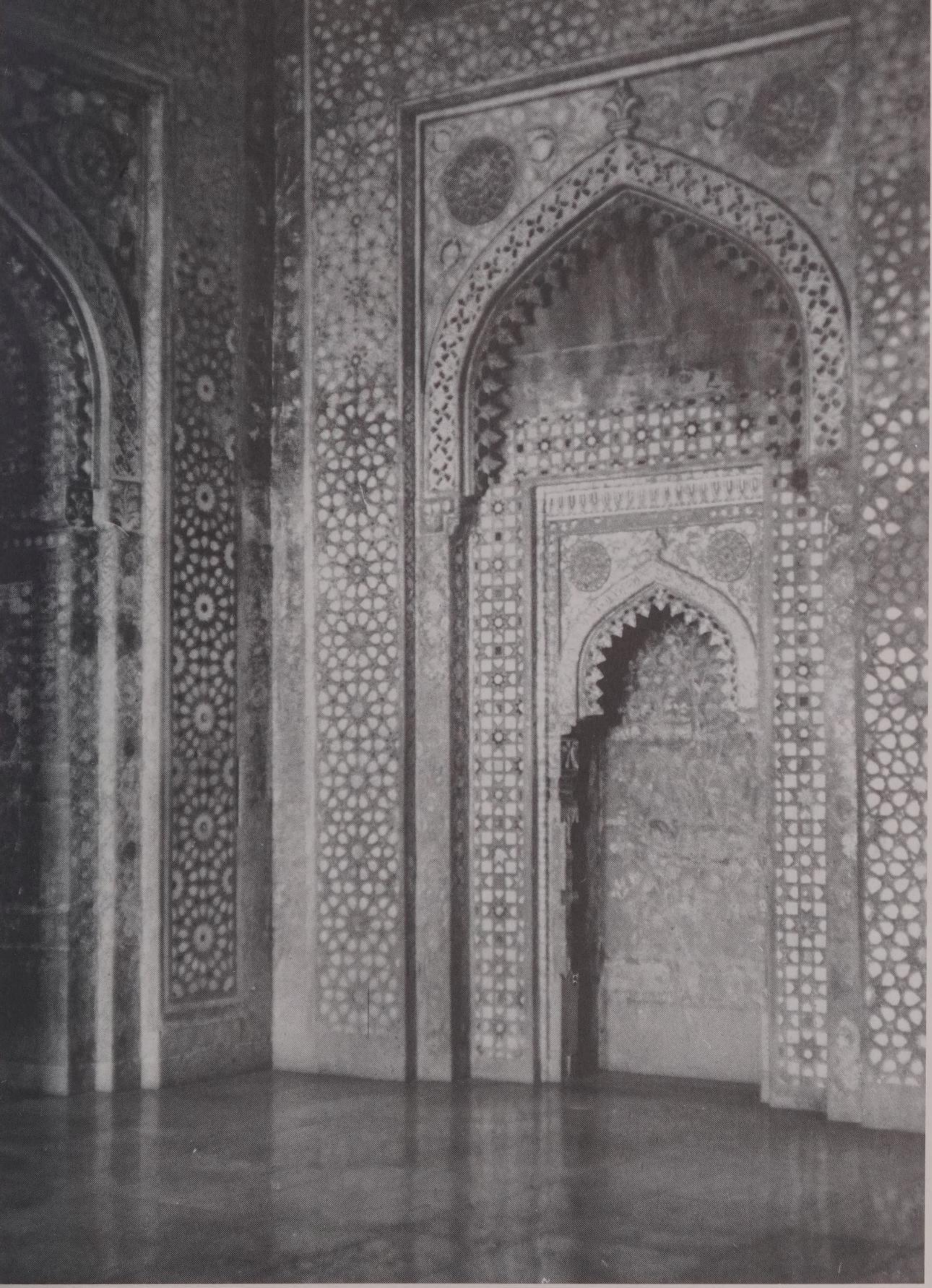


442. Bulwānd Darwāza, back and side view

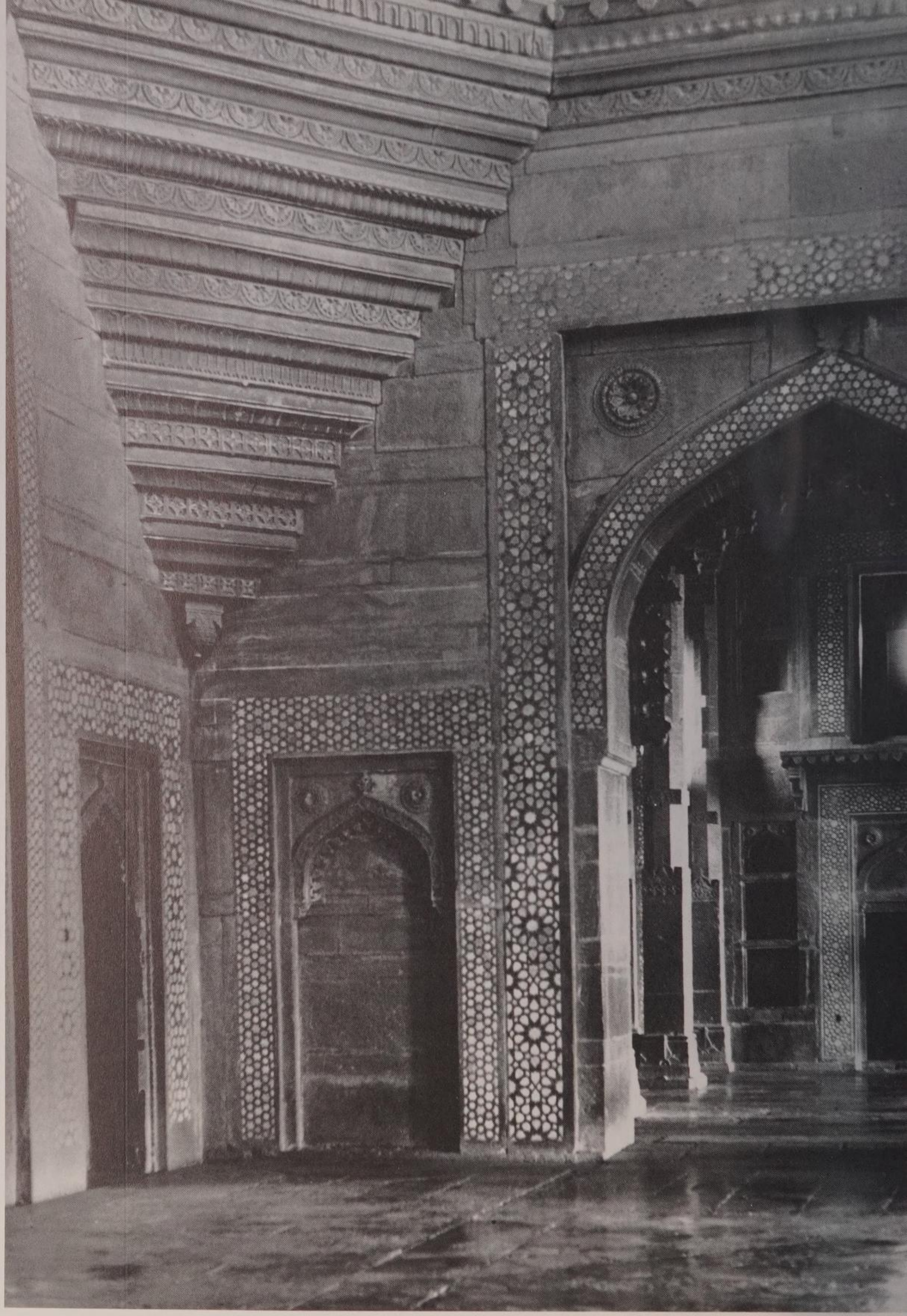
443. Salīm Chistī Tomb, Fatehpur Sīkrī

444. Jami Masjid, Fatehpur Sīkrī

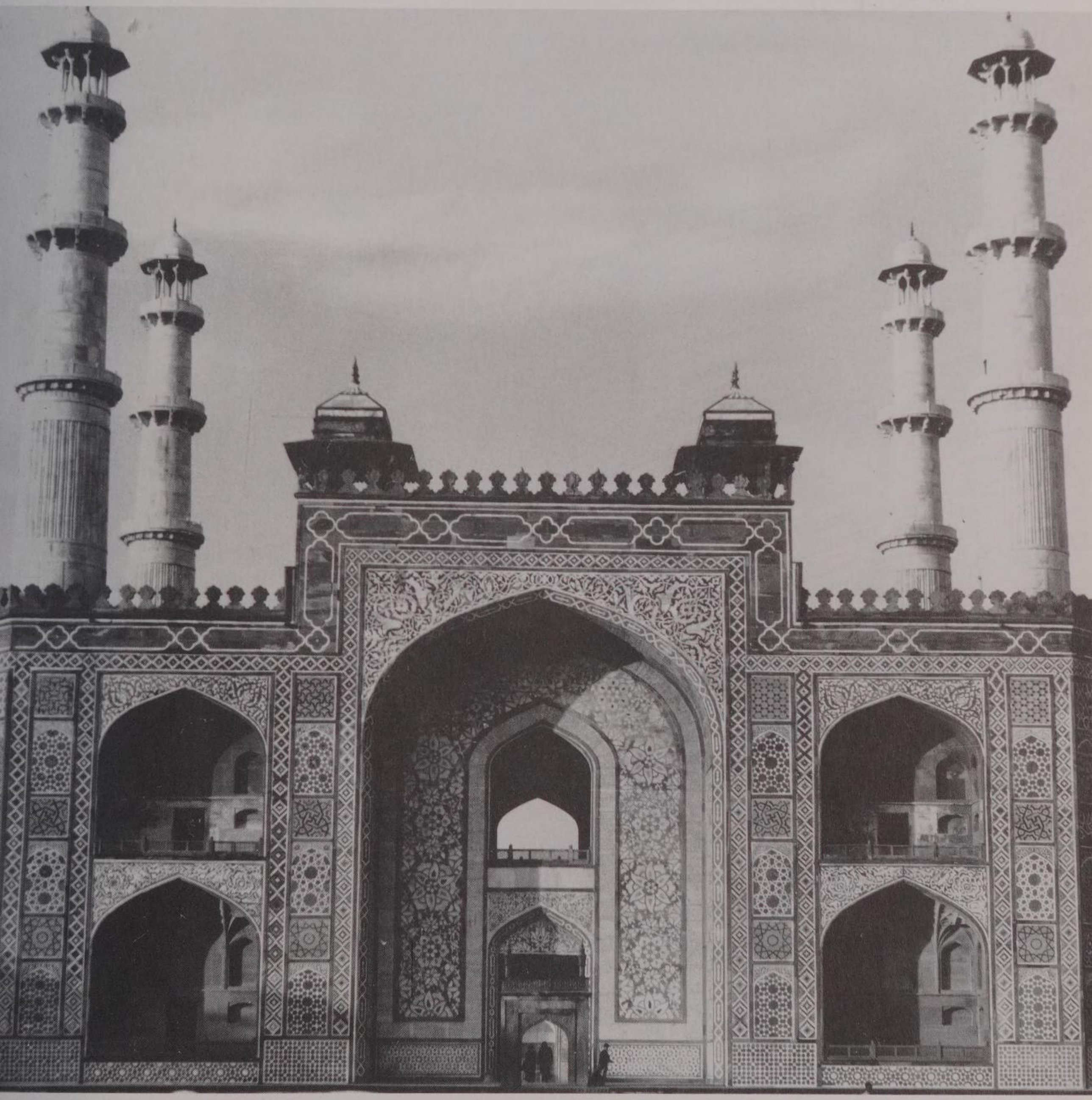
445. Jami Masjid, prayer-hall detail



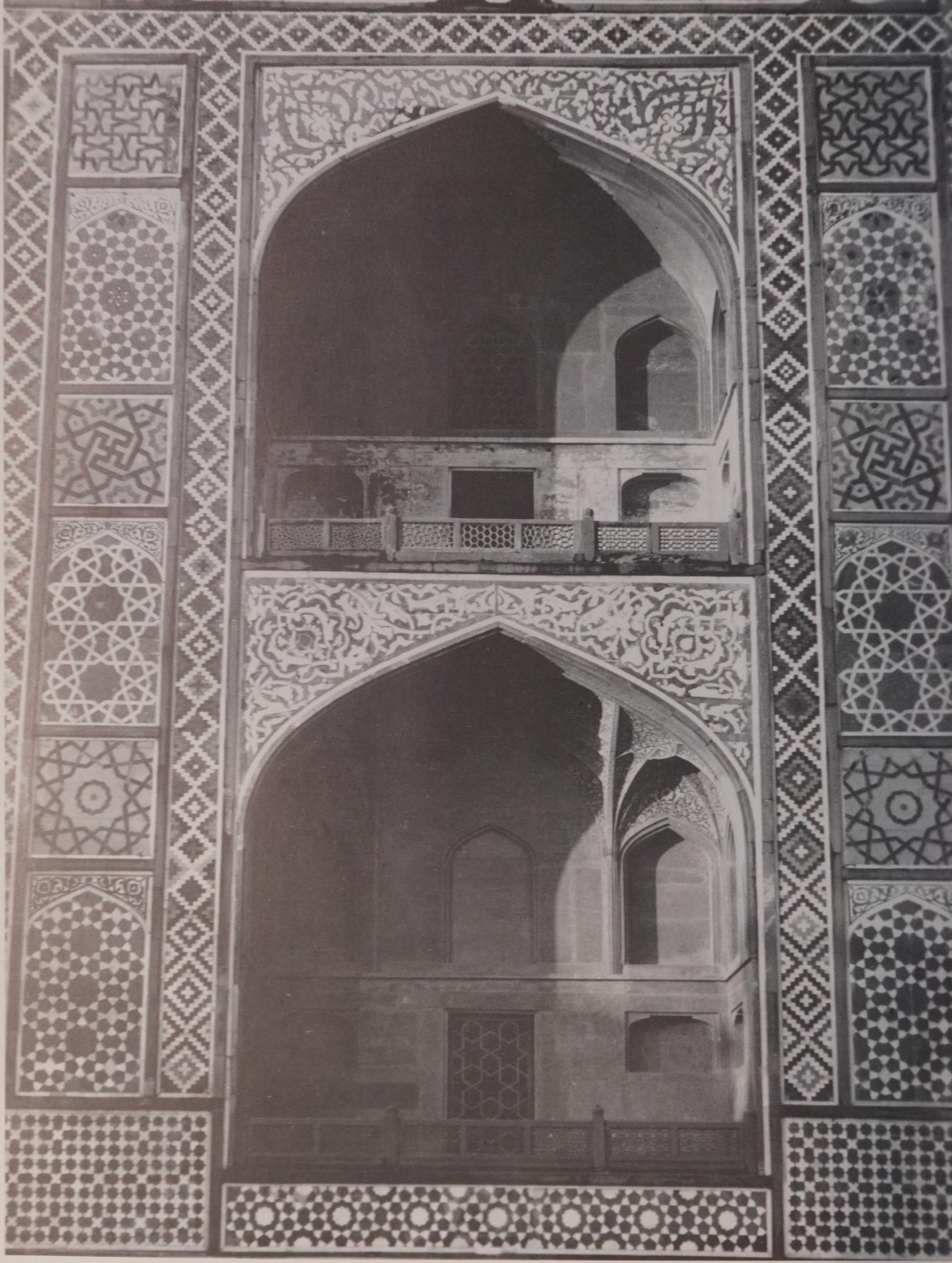
446. Jami Masjid, prayer-hall detail



447. Jami Masjid, interior detail of chapel entrance

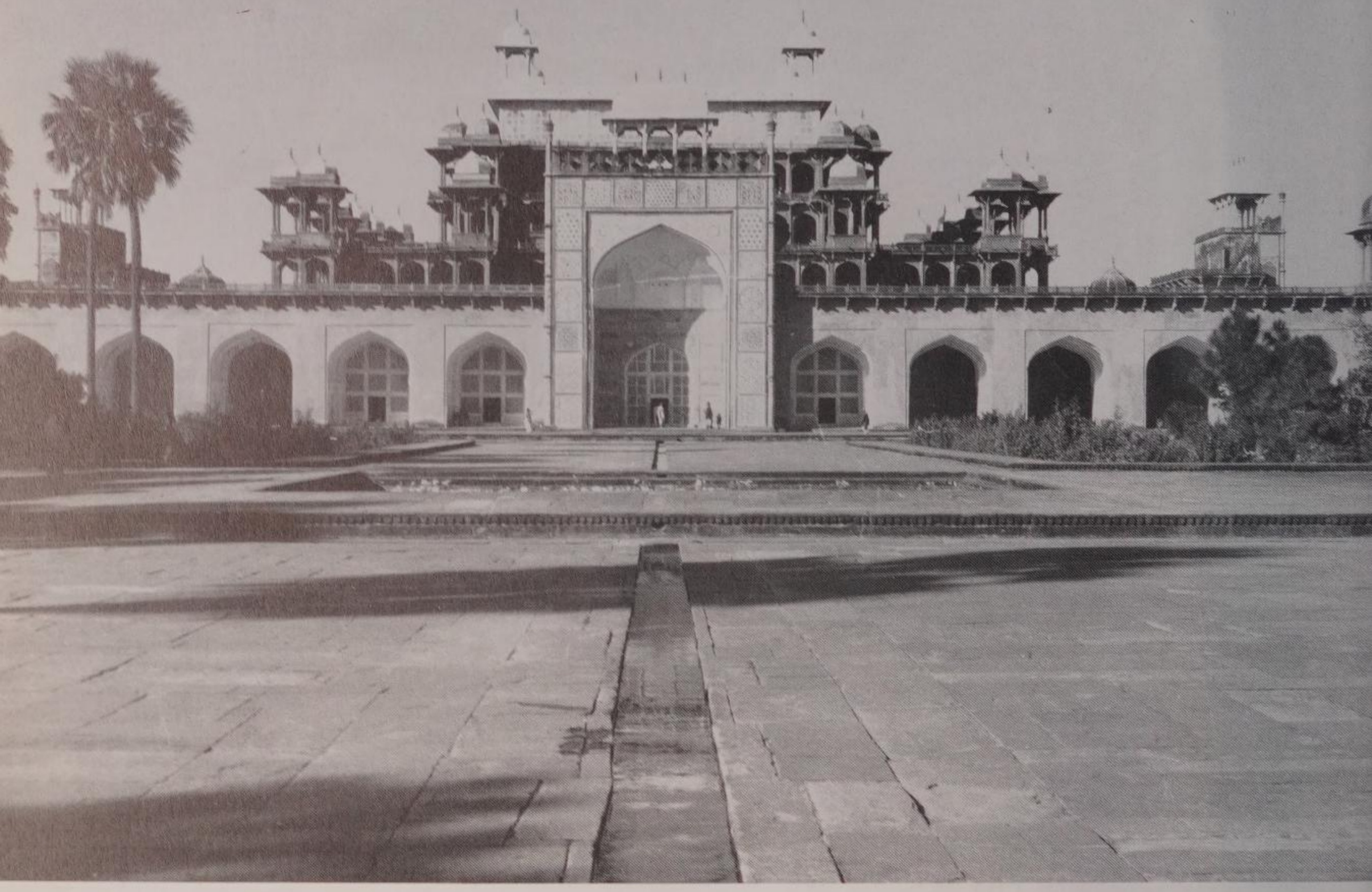


448. Akbar's tomb, entrance gate, Sikandra

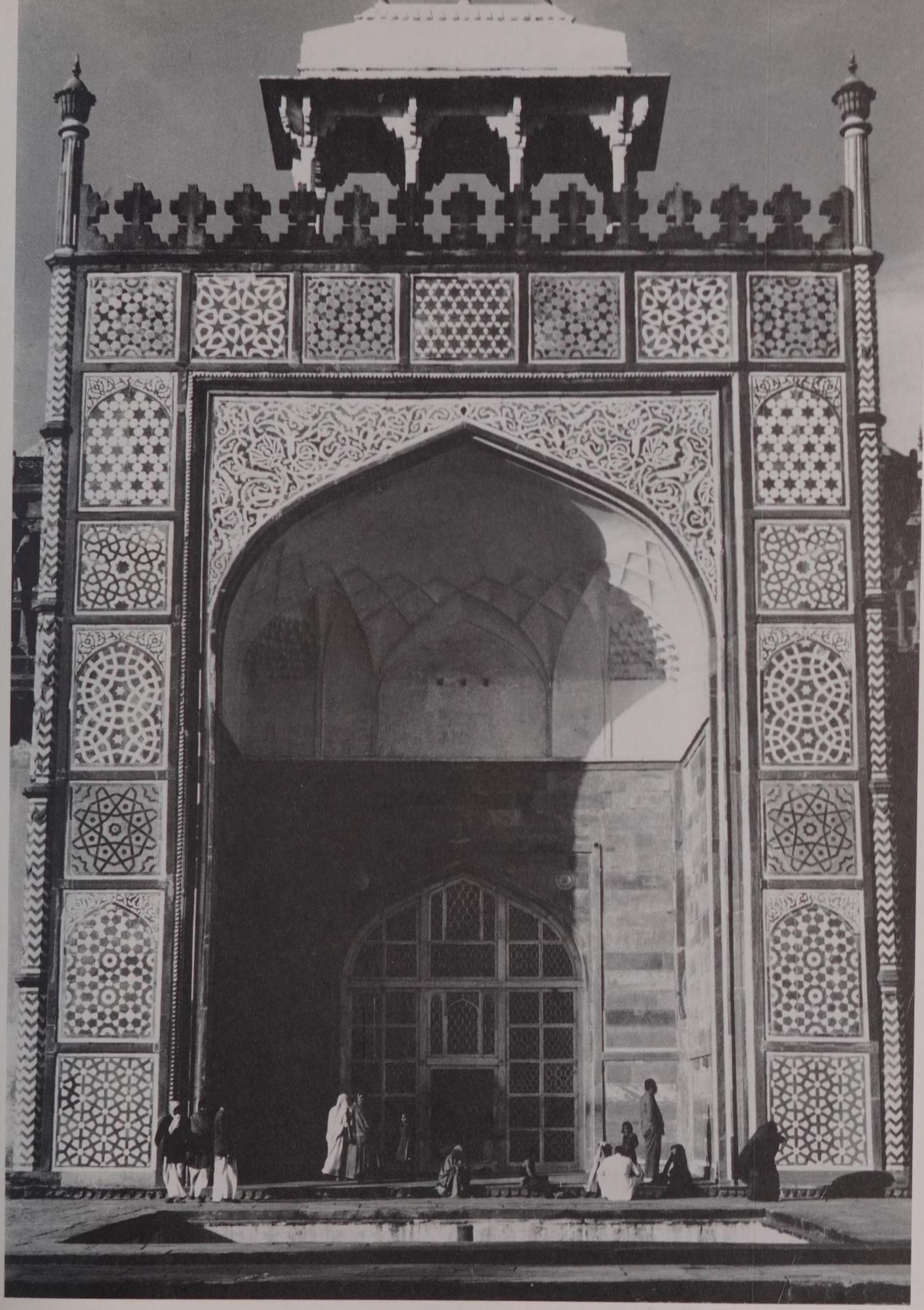


449. Akbar's tomb, gate detail

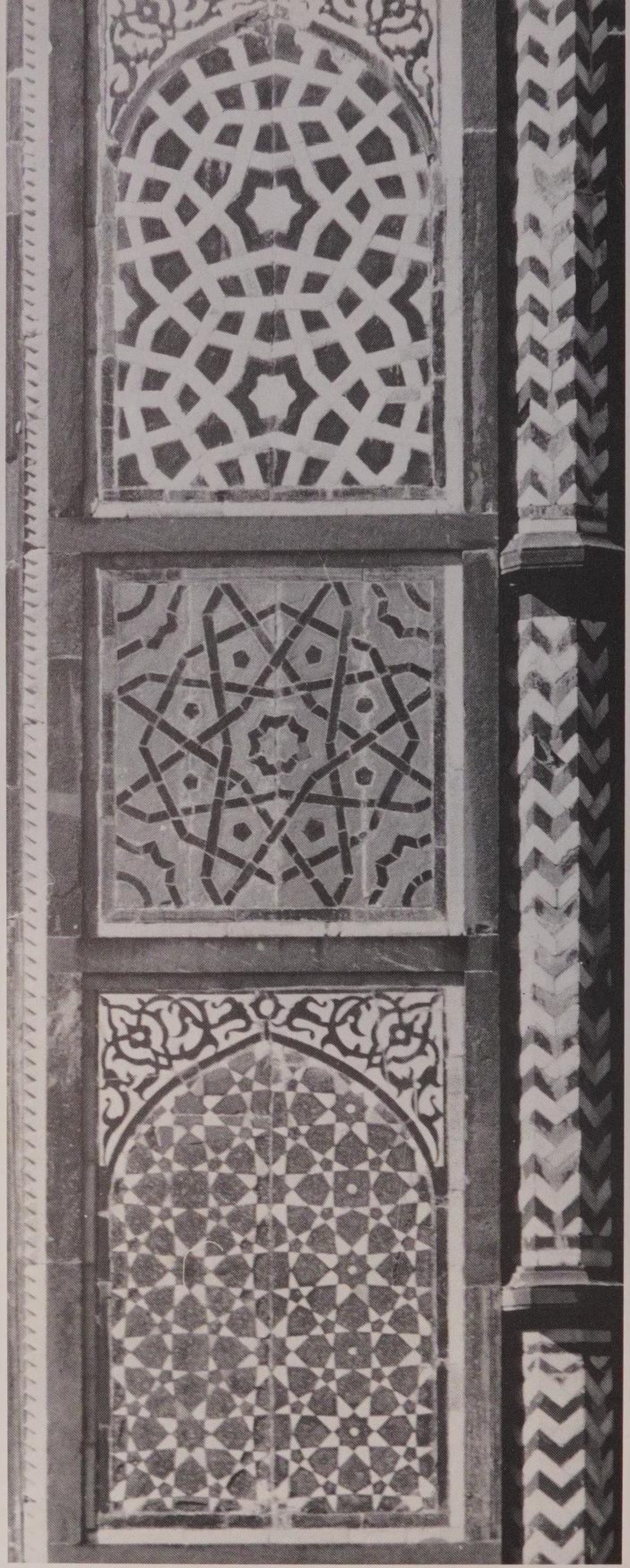
450. Akbar's tomb, gate detail



451. Akbar's tomb, general view

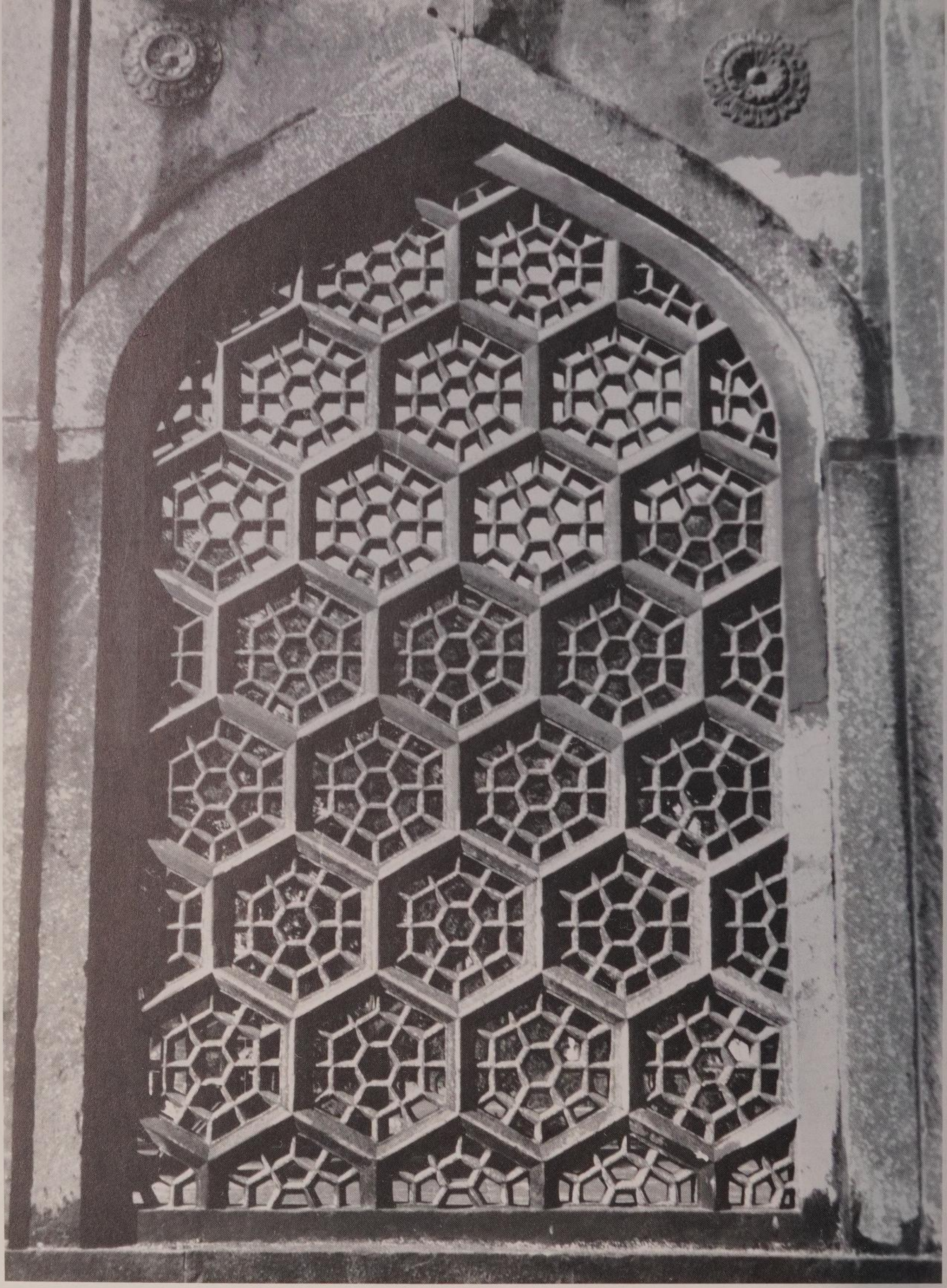


452. Akbar's tomb, central arch (south side)



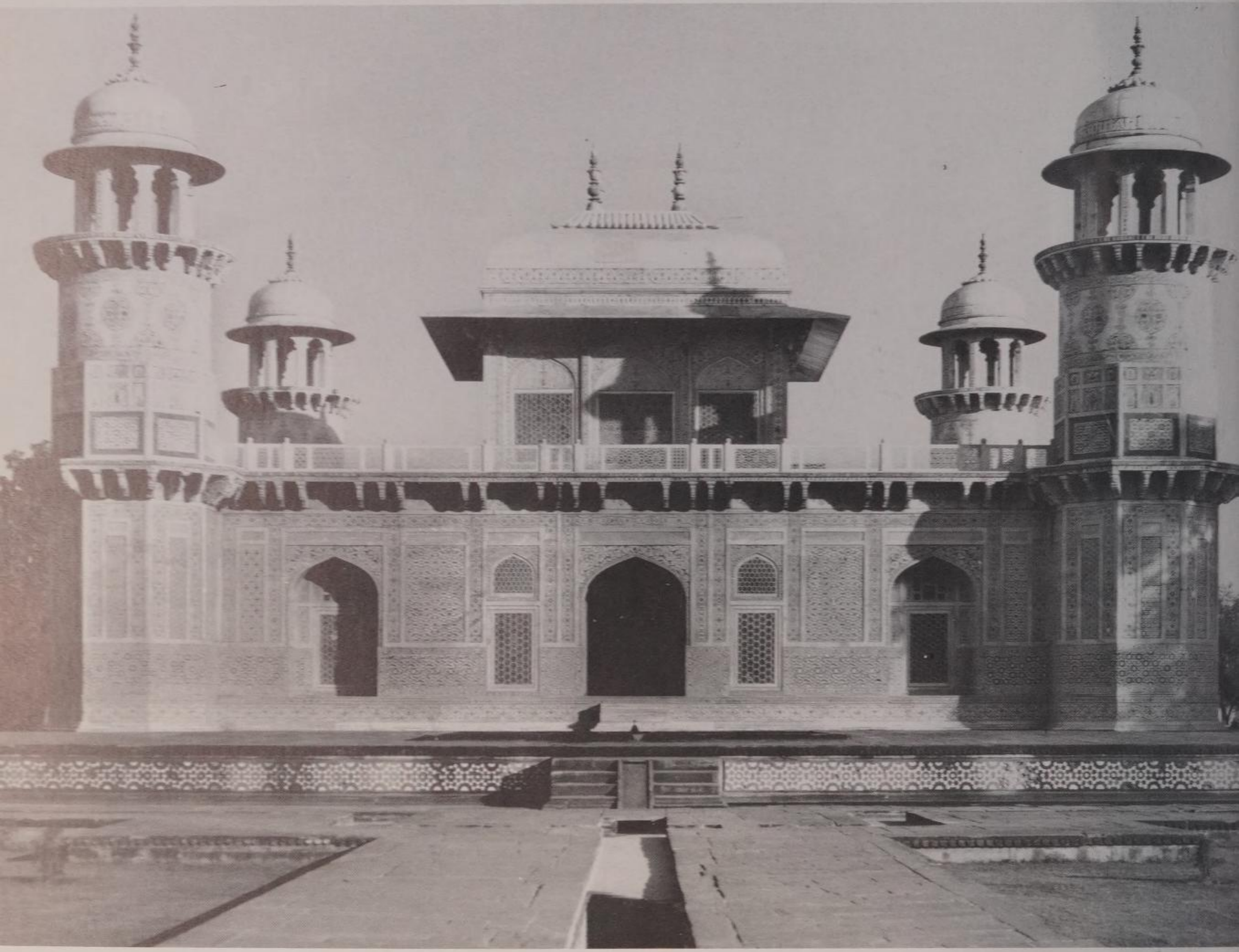
453. Akbar's tomb, detail of central arch

454. Akbar's tomb, upper level detail

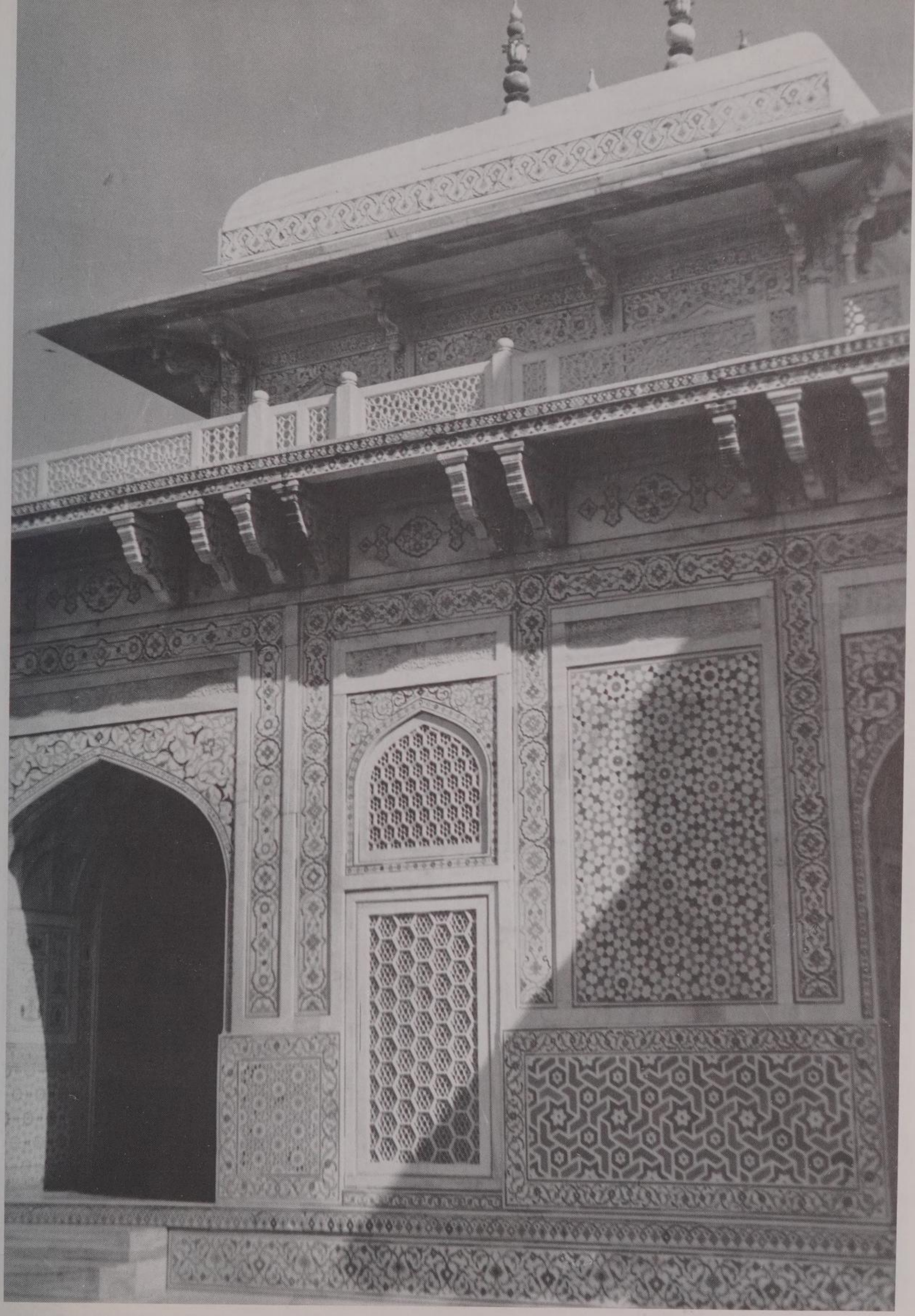


455. Akbar's tomb, east gate detail

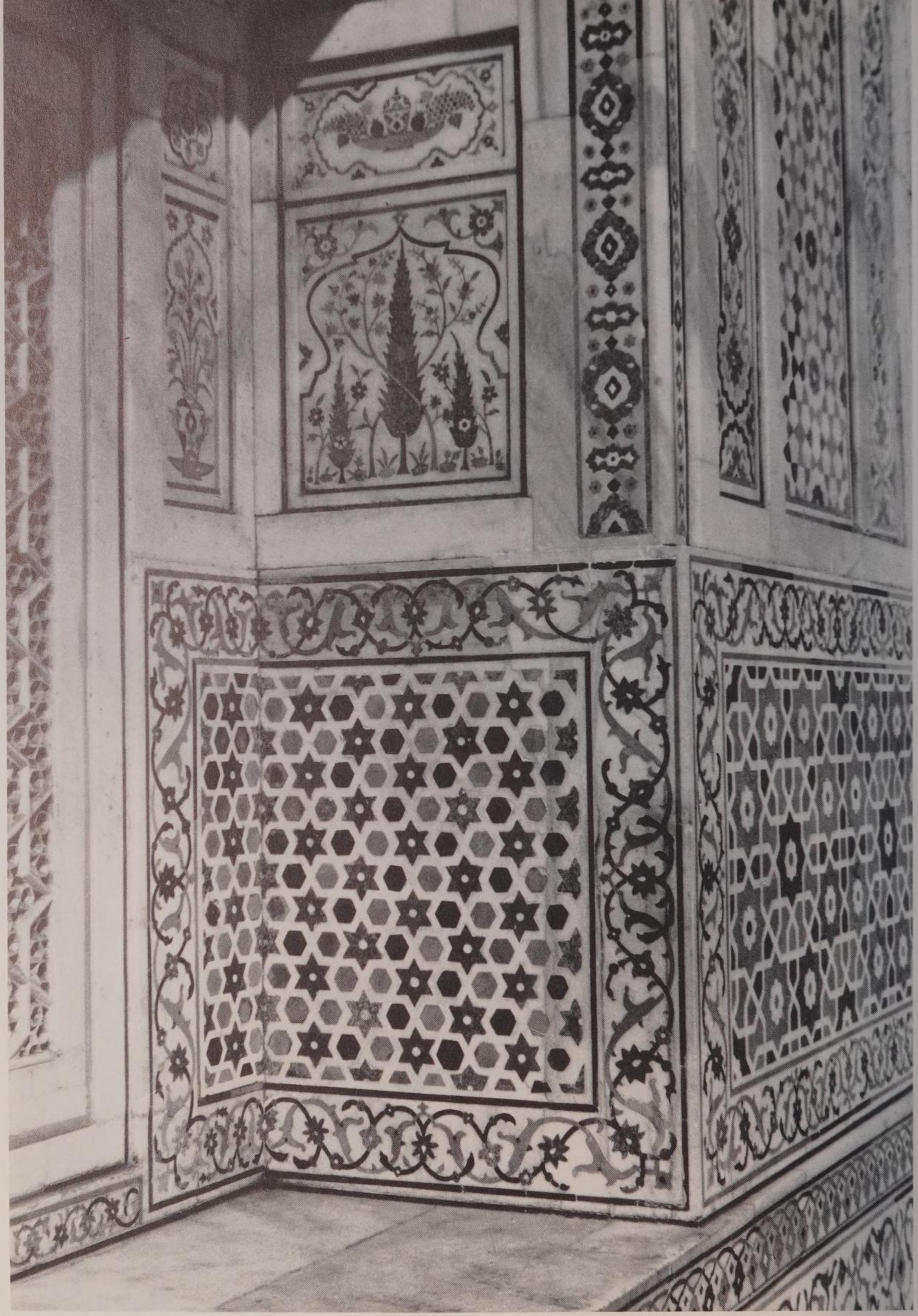
456. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, entrance gate, Agra



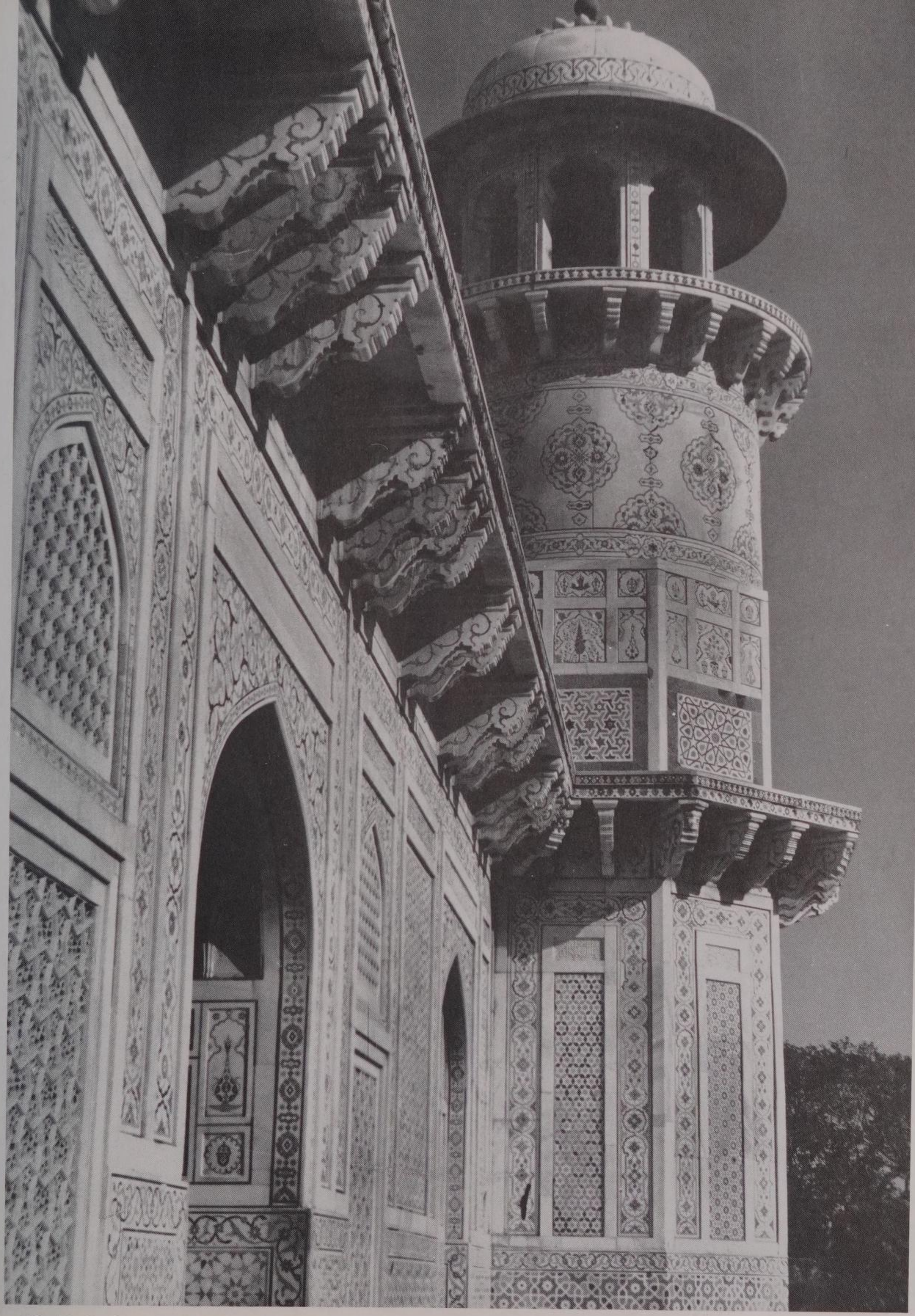
457. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, general view



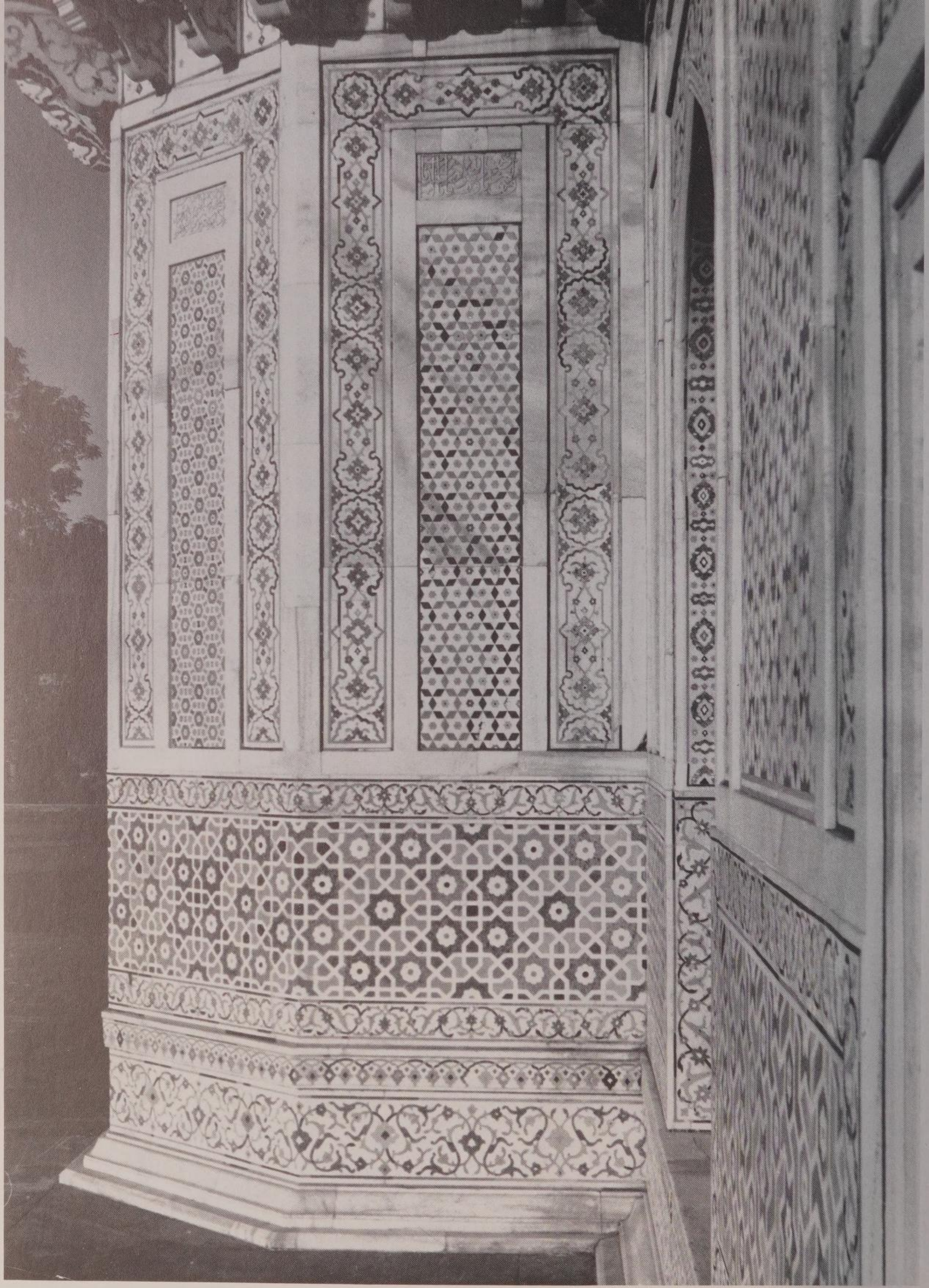
458. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, ornament detail



459. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, ornament detail

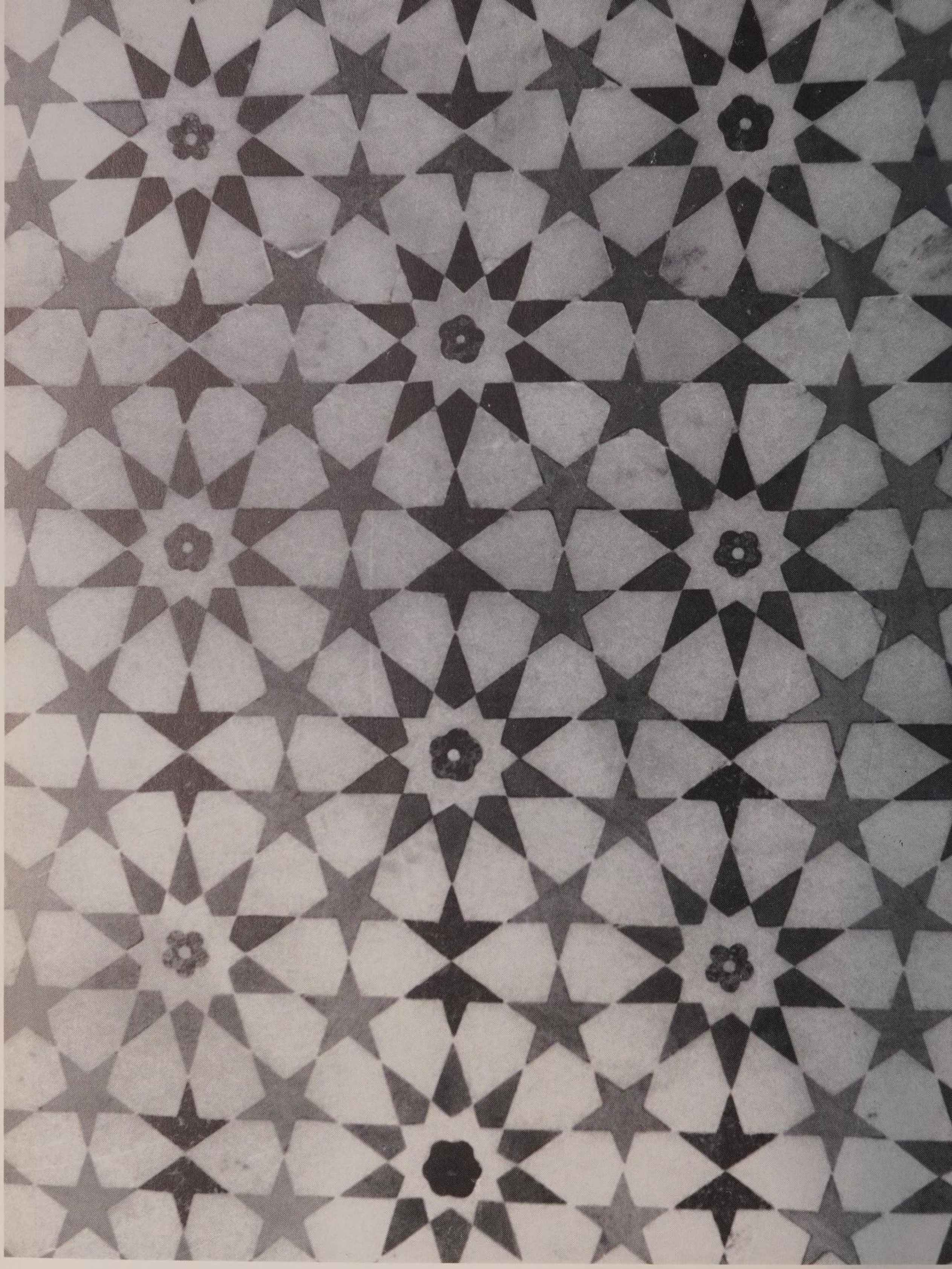


460. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, tower detail

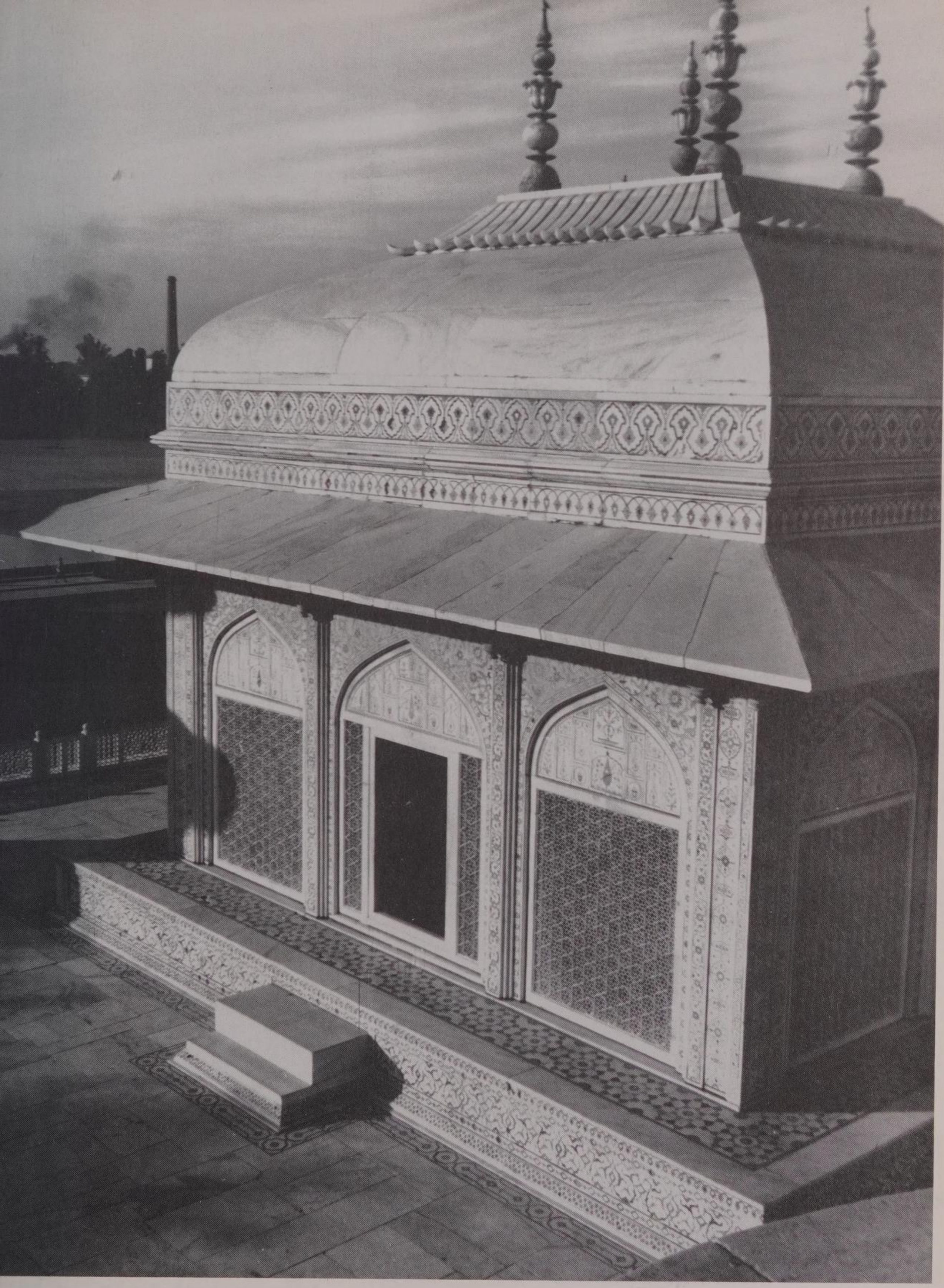


461. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, tower detail

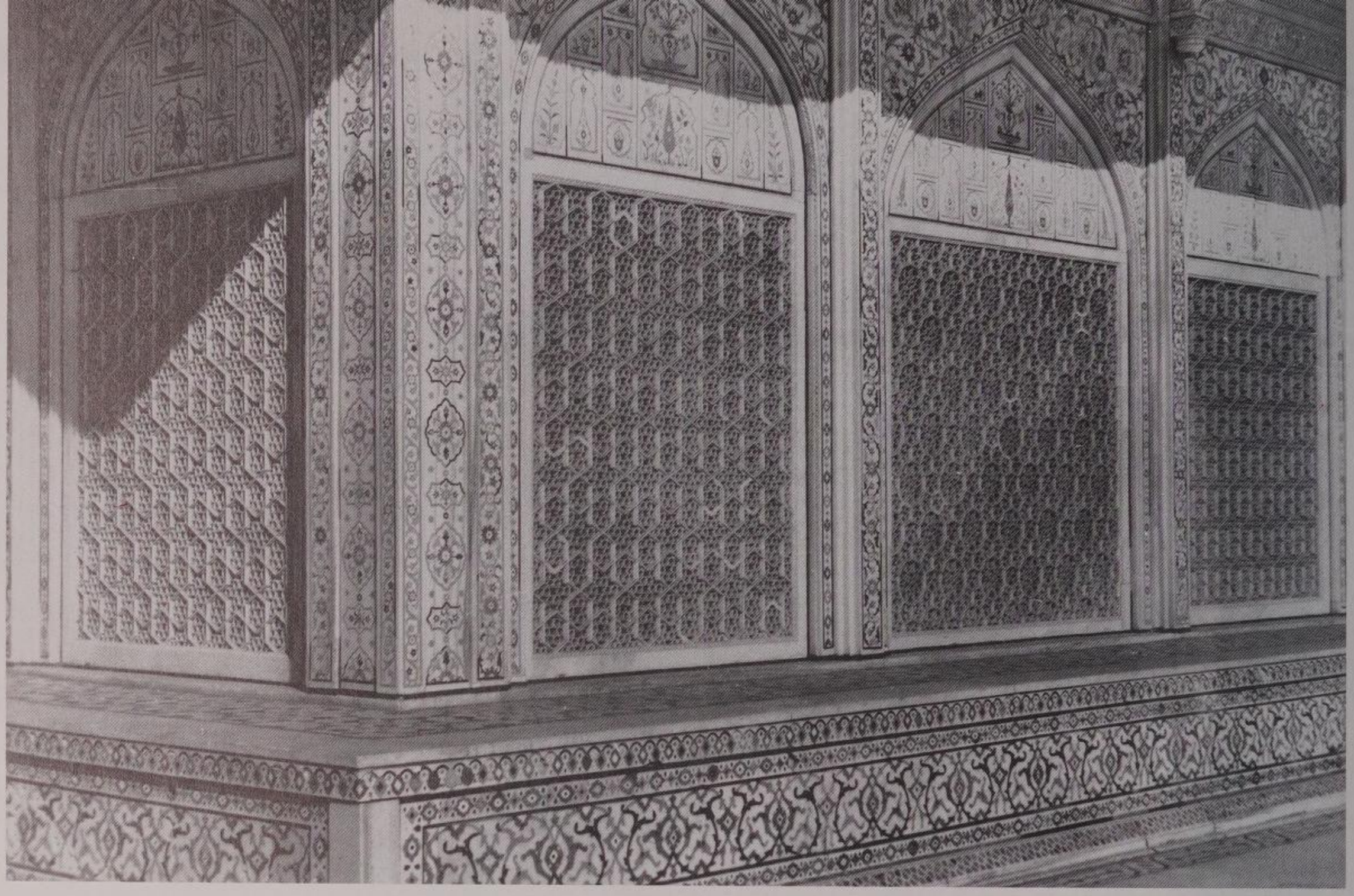
462. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, tower detail



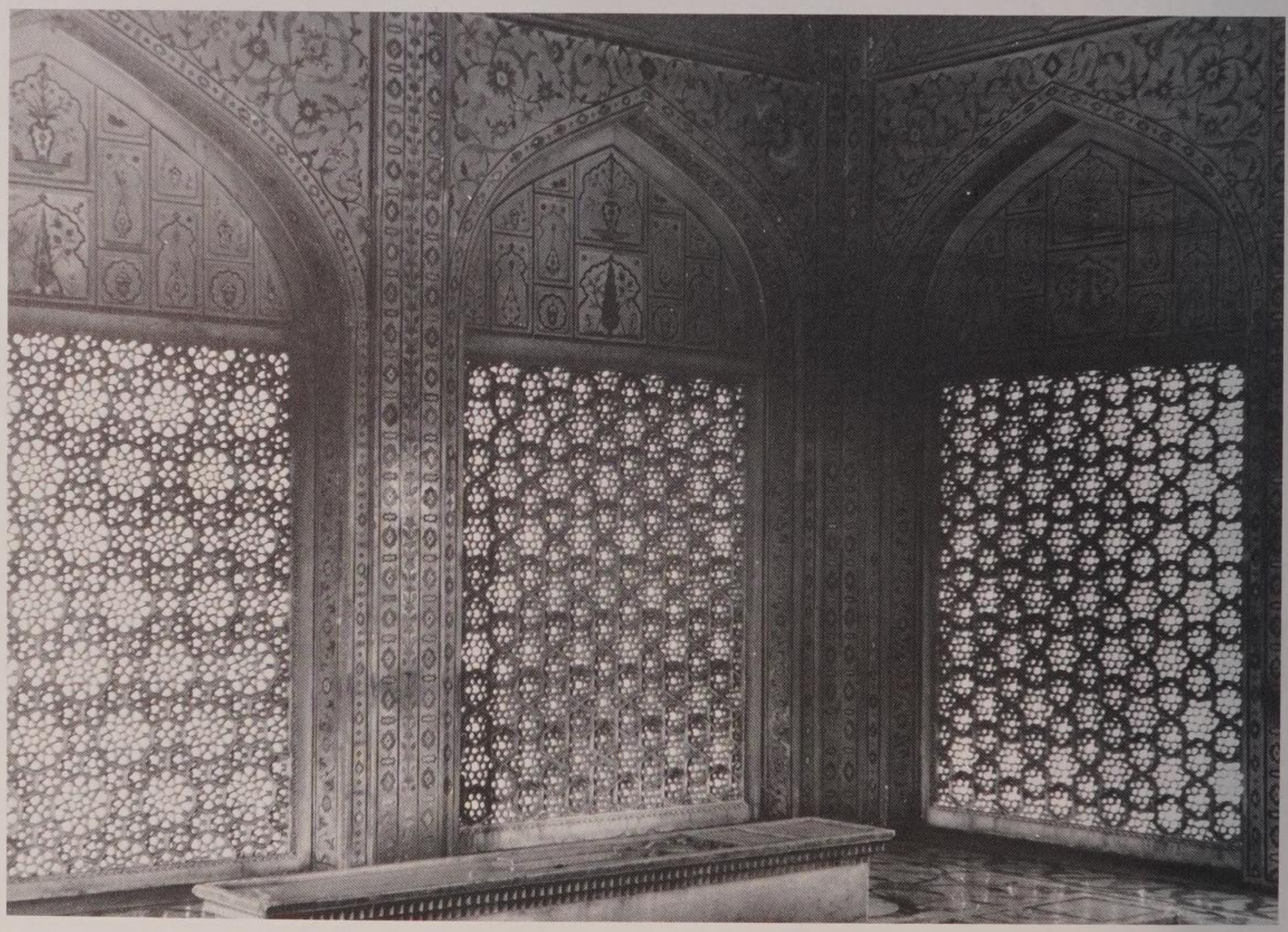
463. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, tower detail



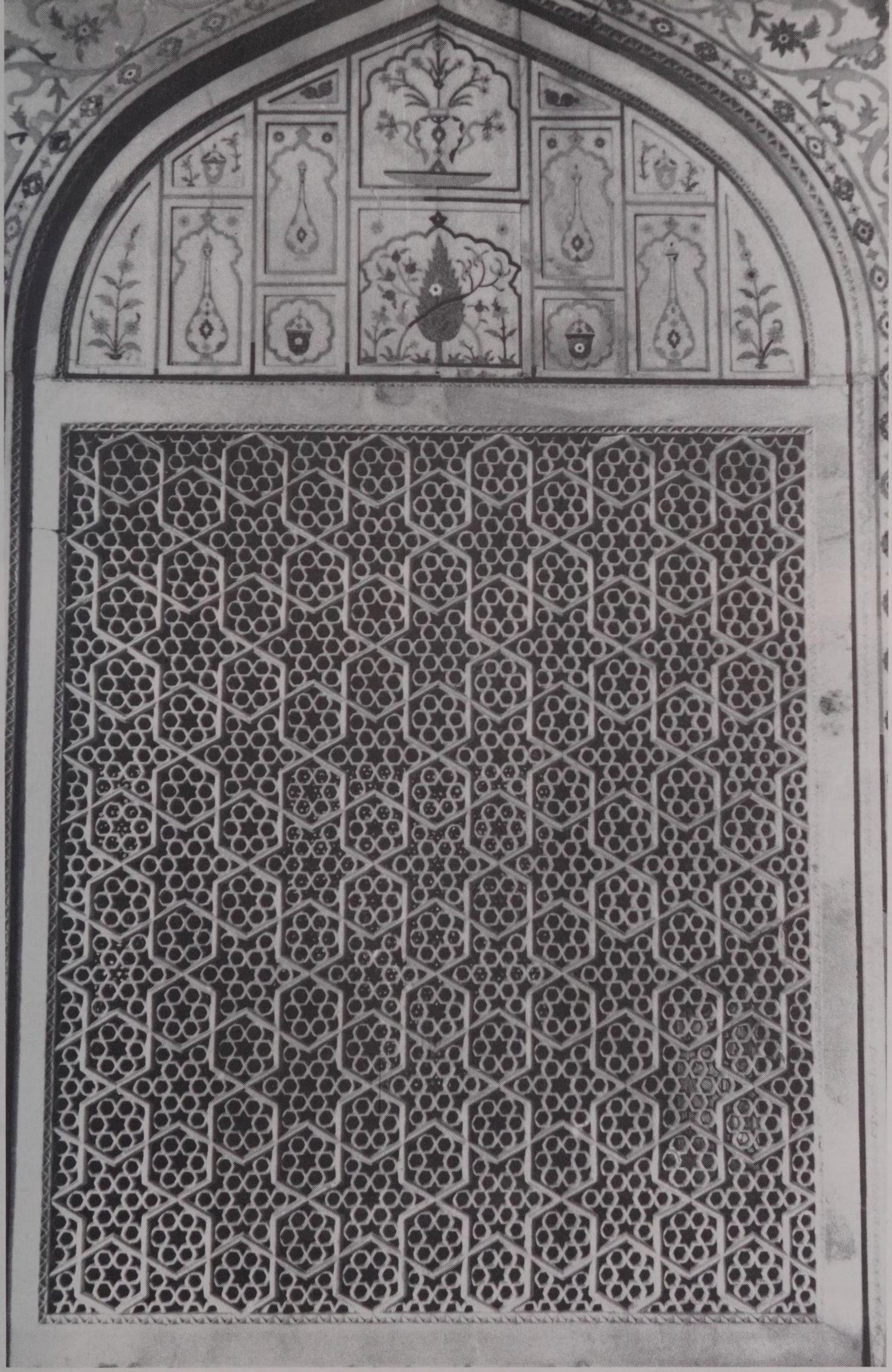
464. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, pavilion detail



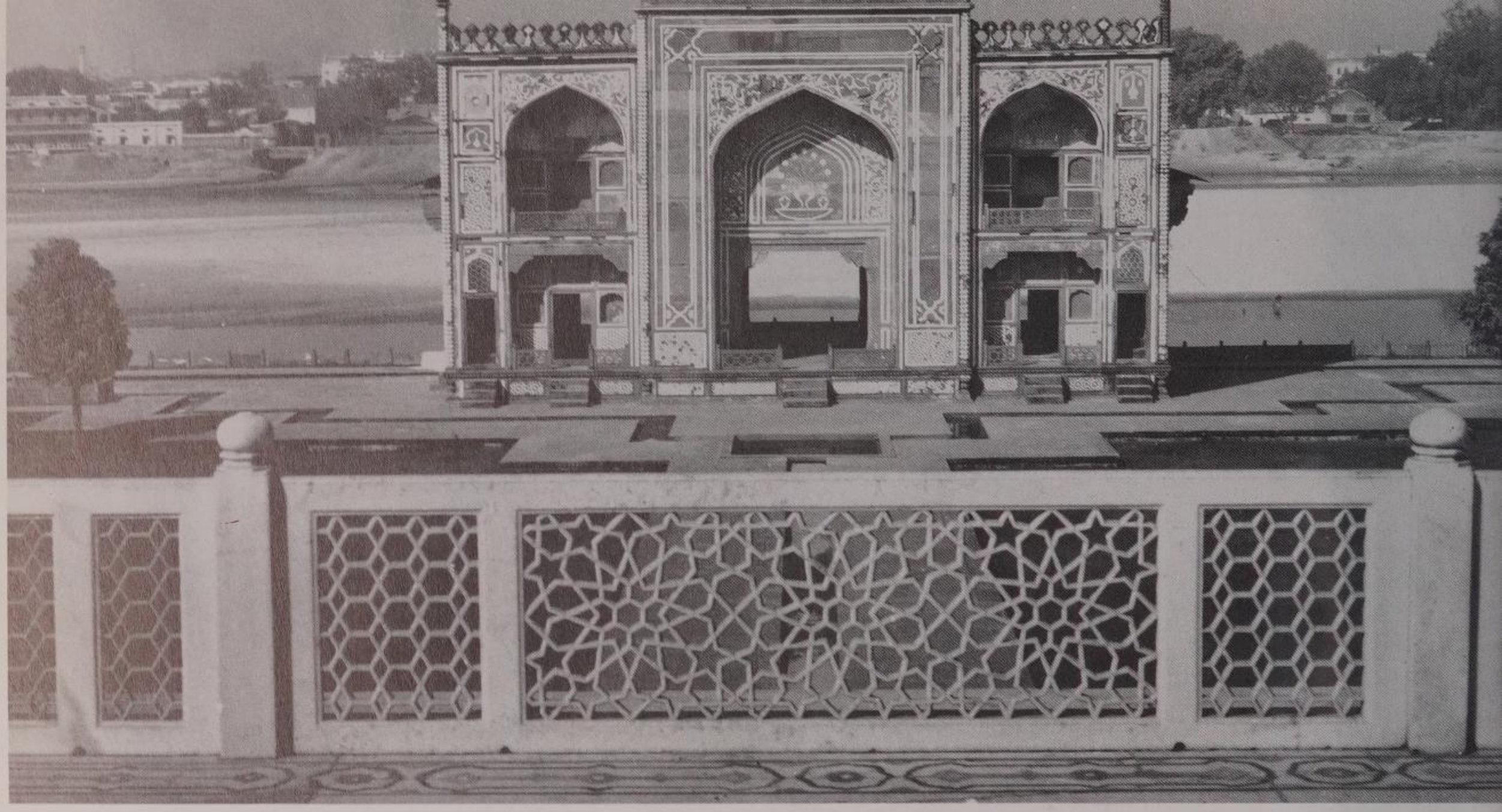
465. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, screen detail



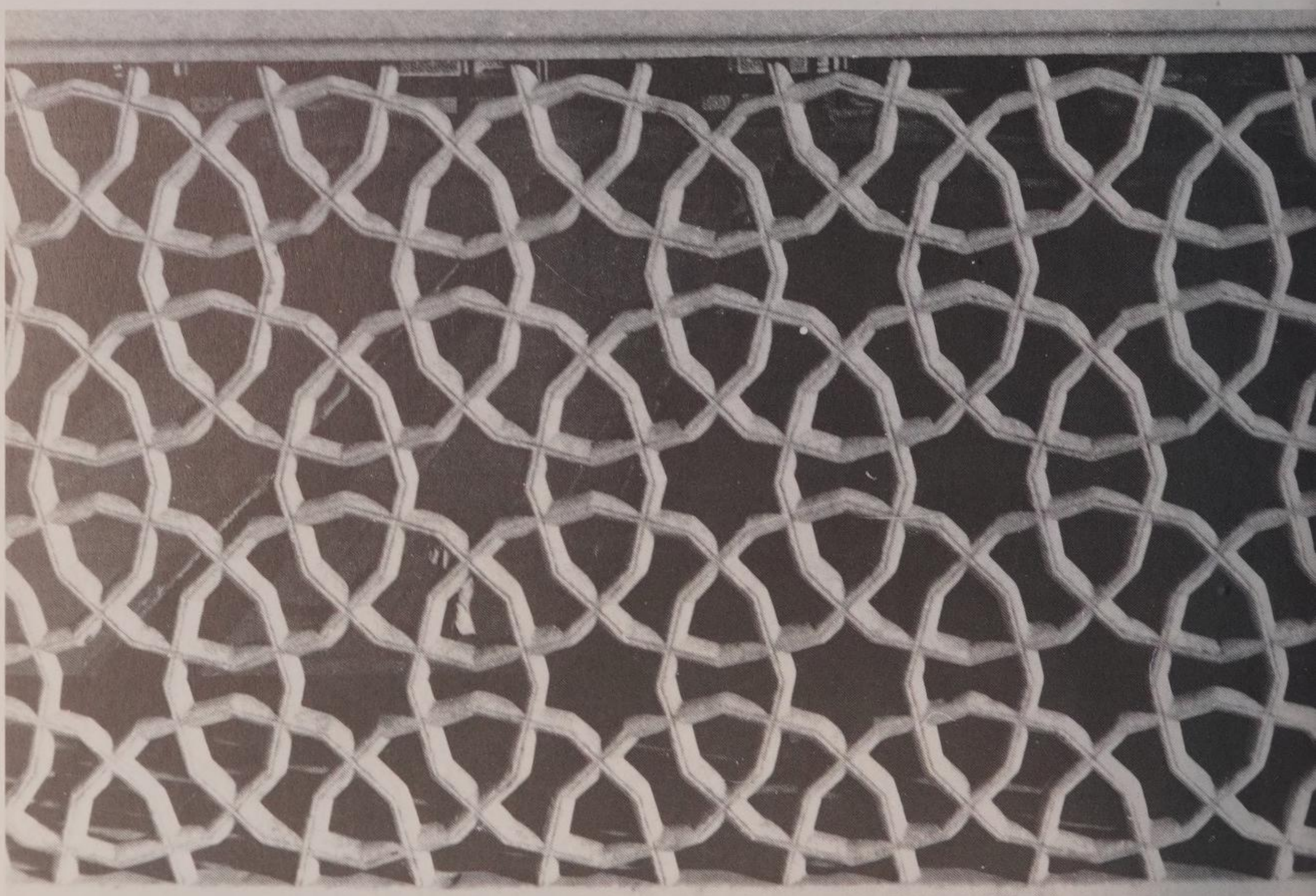
466. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, screen detail



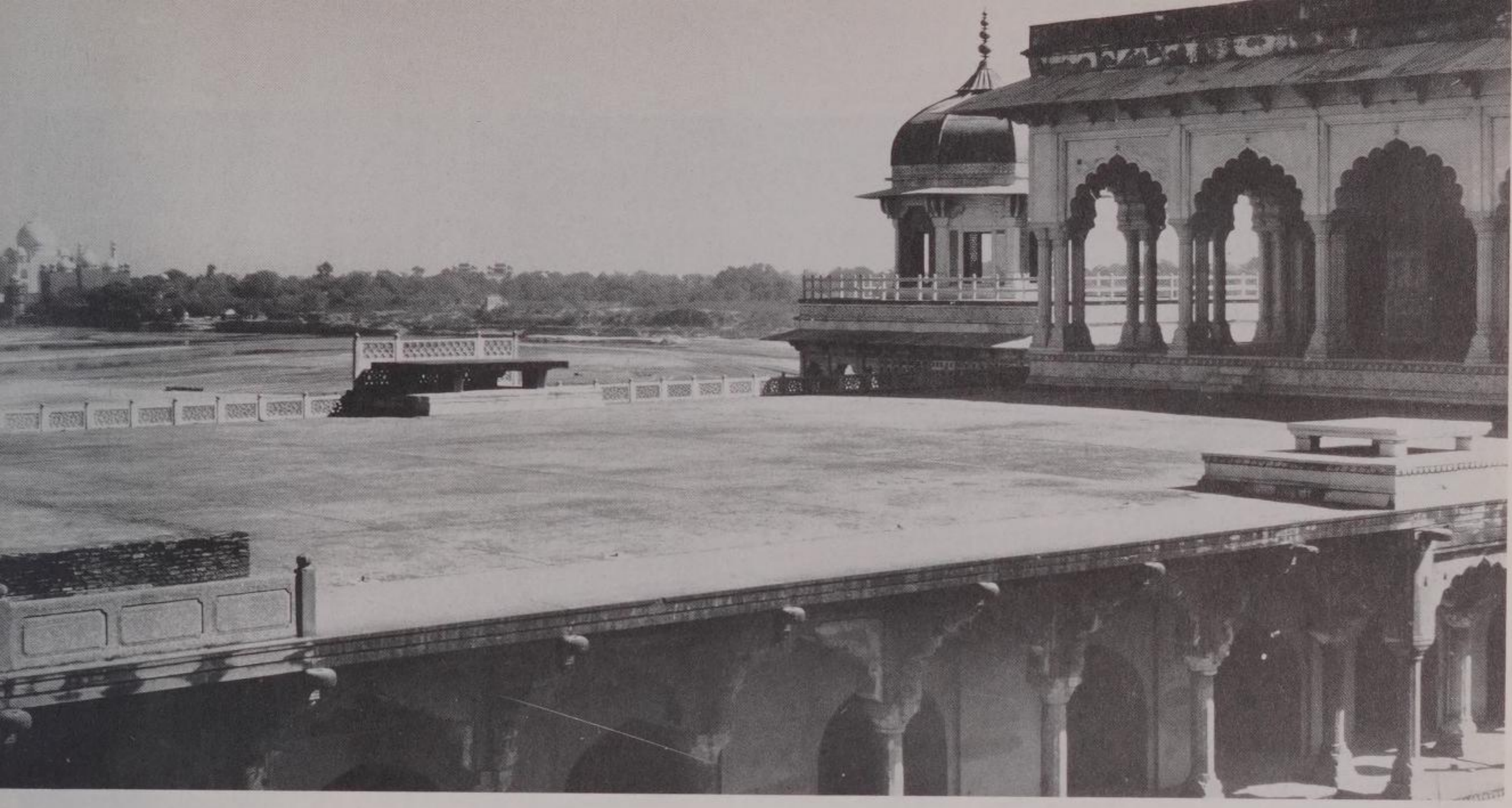
467. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, screen detail



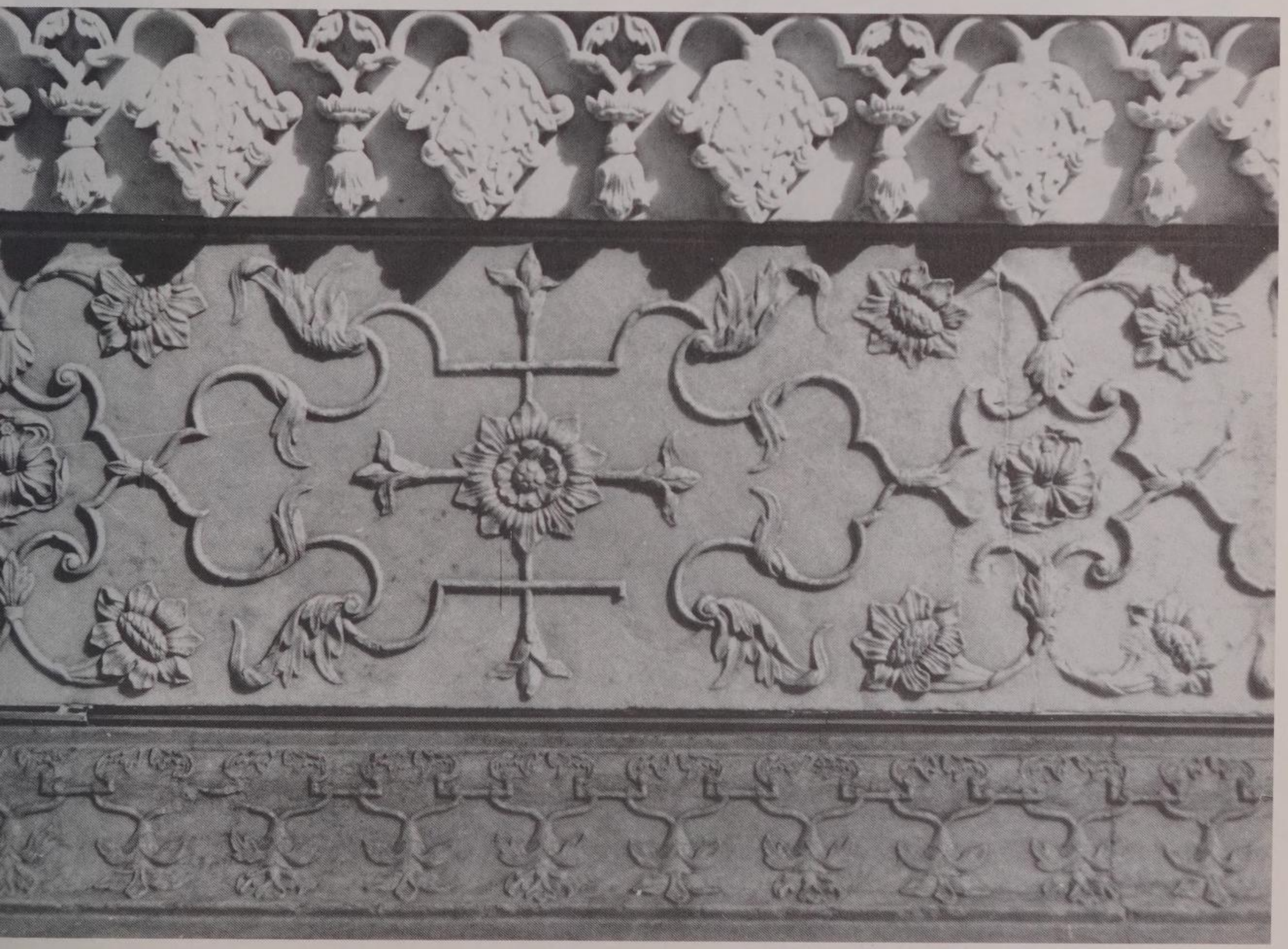
468. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, railing detail



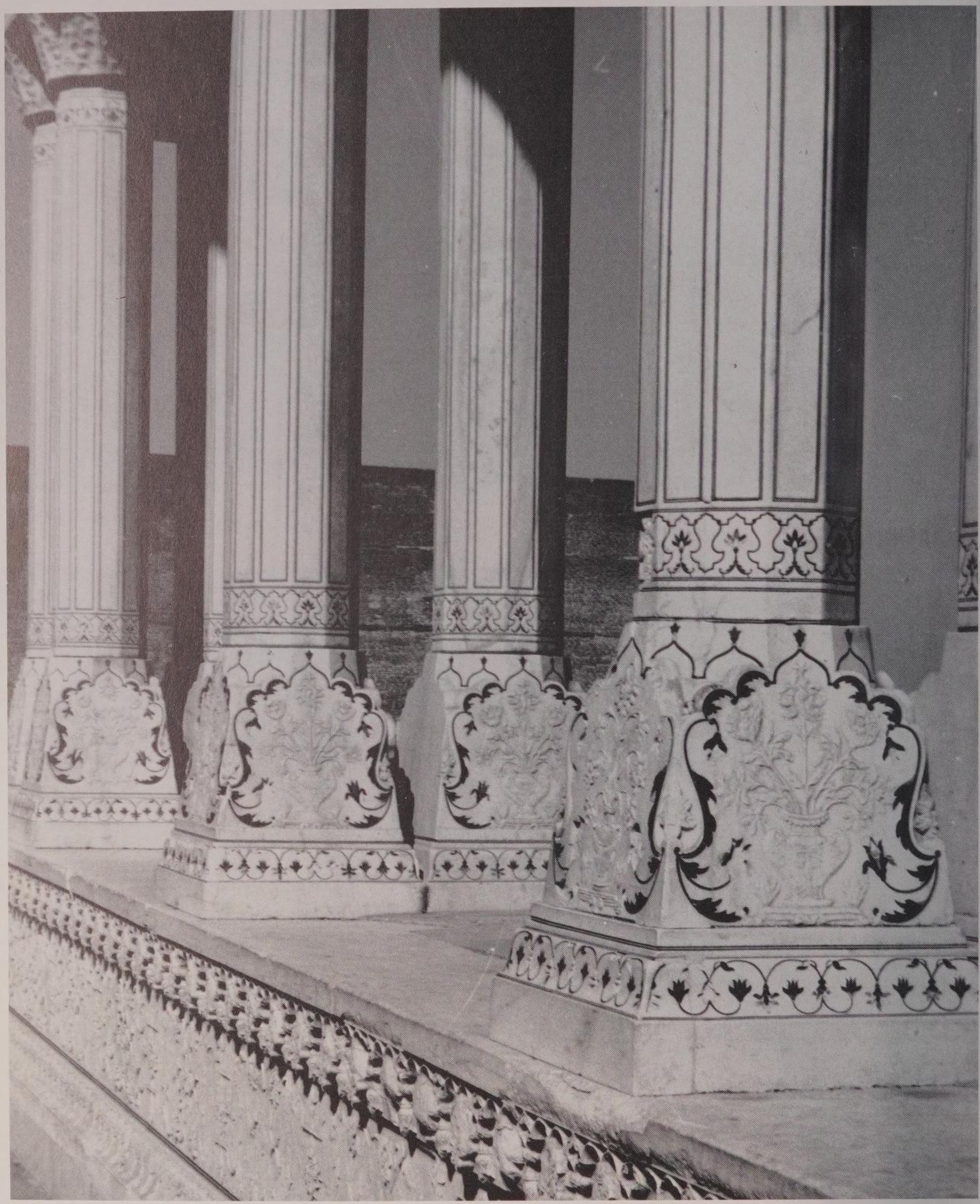
469. Tomb of Itmād-ud-Daula, railing detail



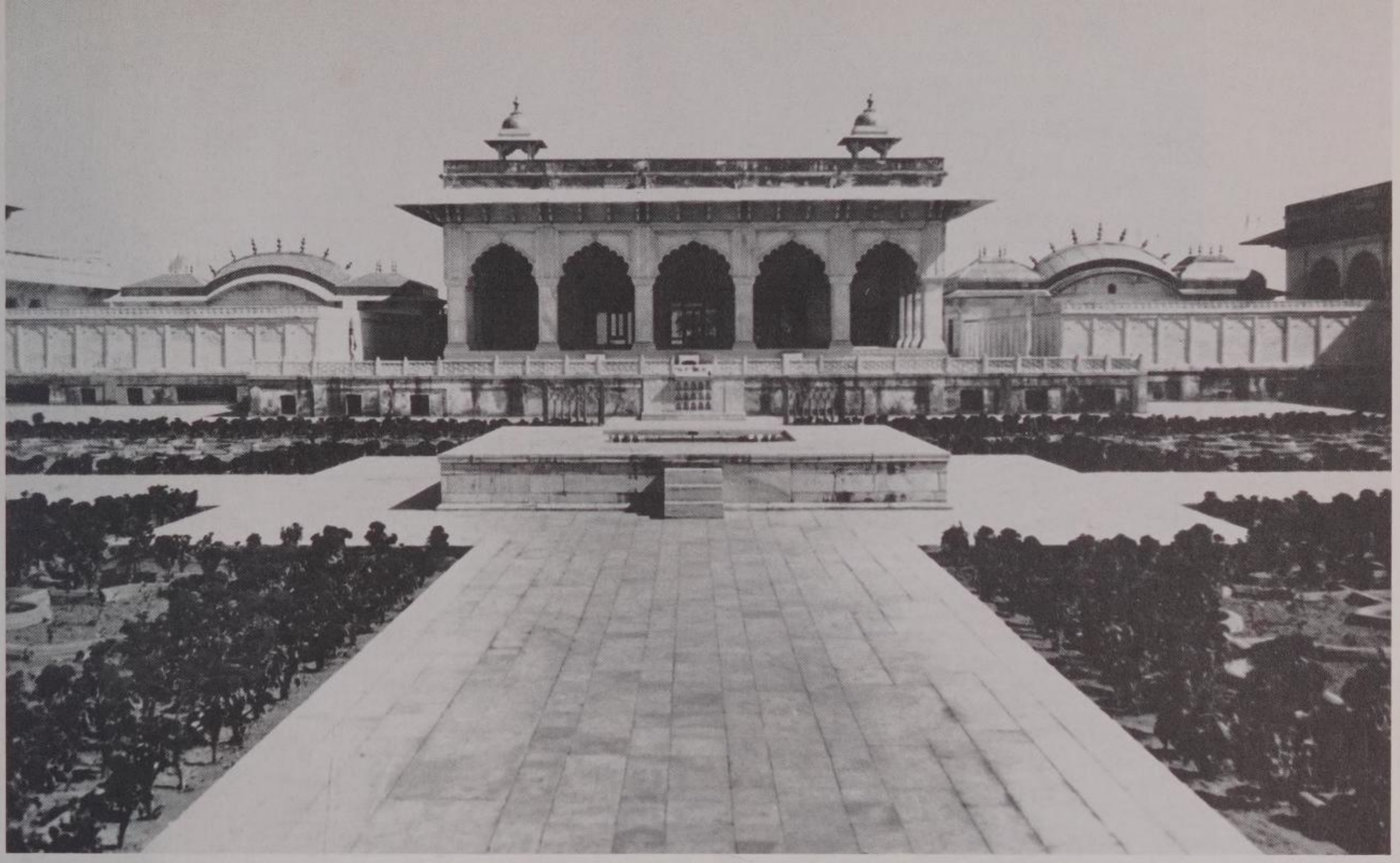
470. Diwāni-Khās, Agra Fort, Agra



471. Diwāni-Khās, base detail

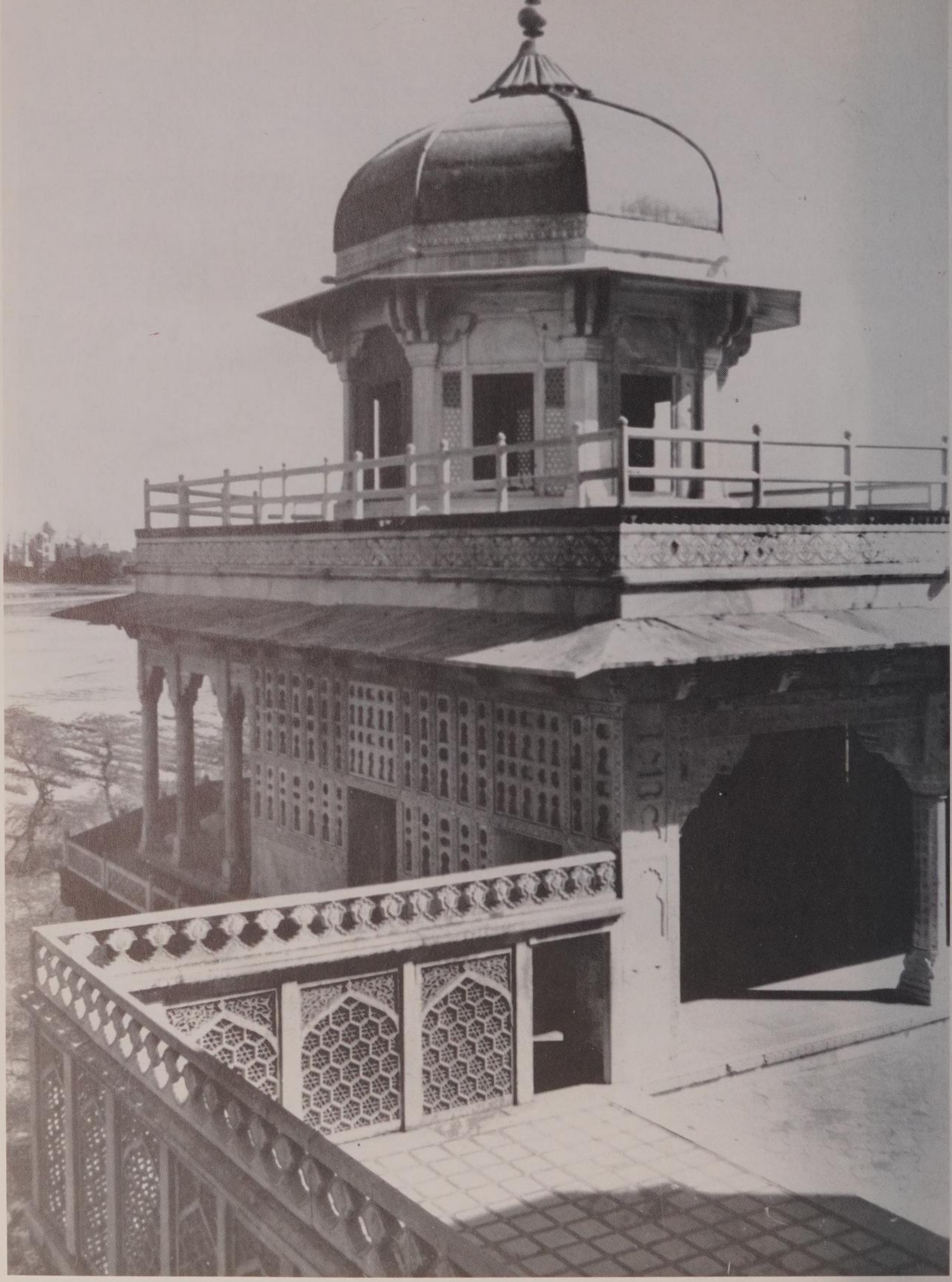


472. Diwāni-Khās, pillar detail



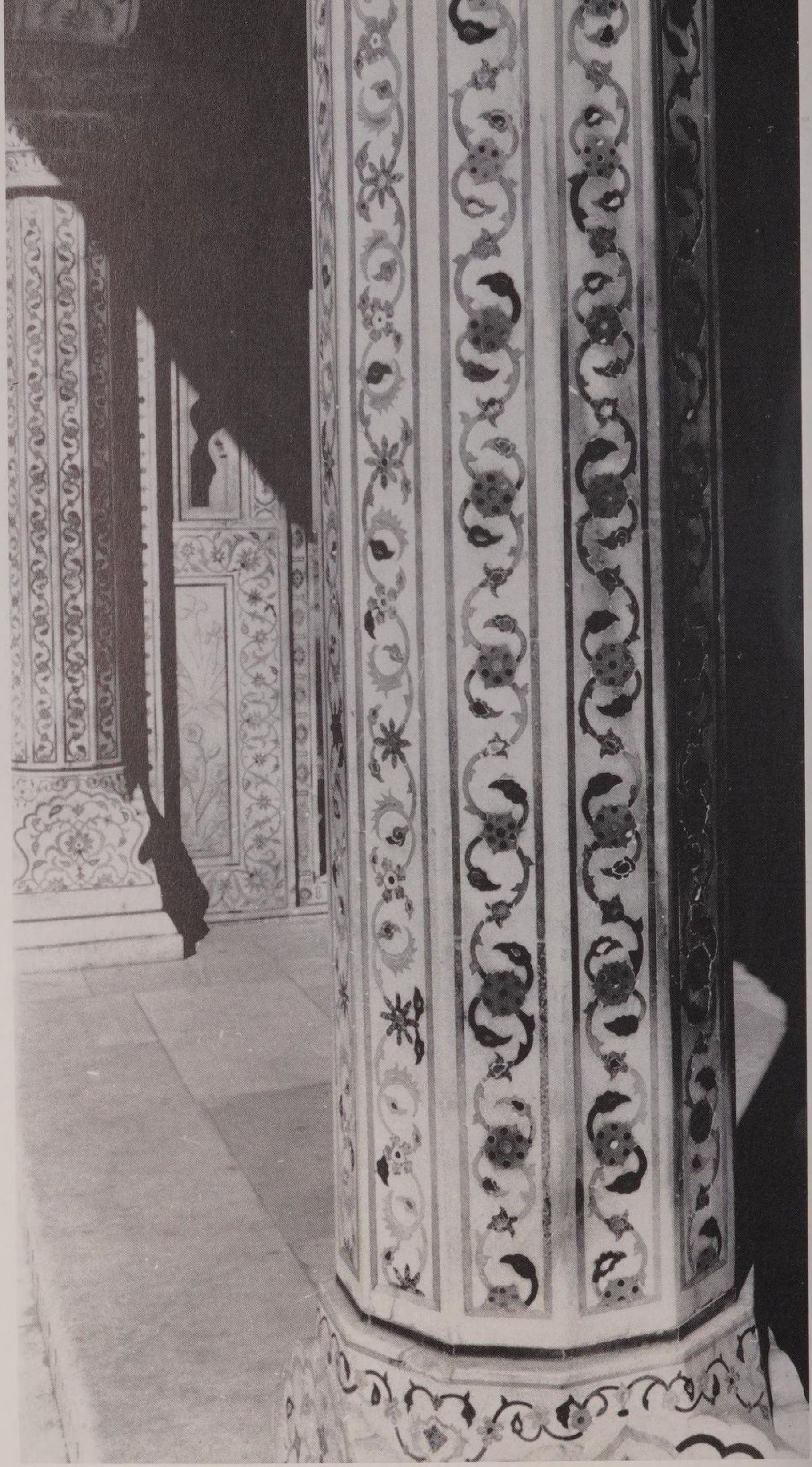
473. Khās Mahal, general view, Agra Fort

474. Golden Pavilion, Agra Fort

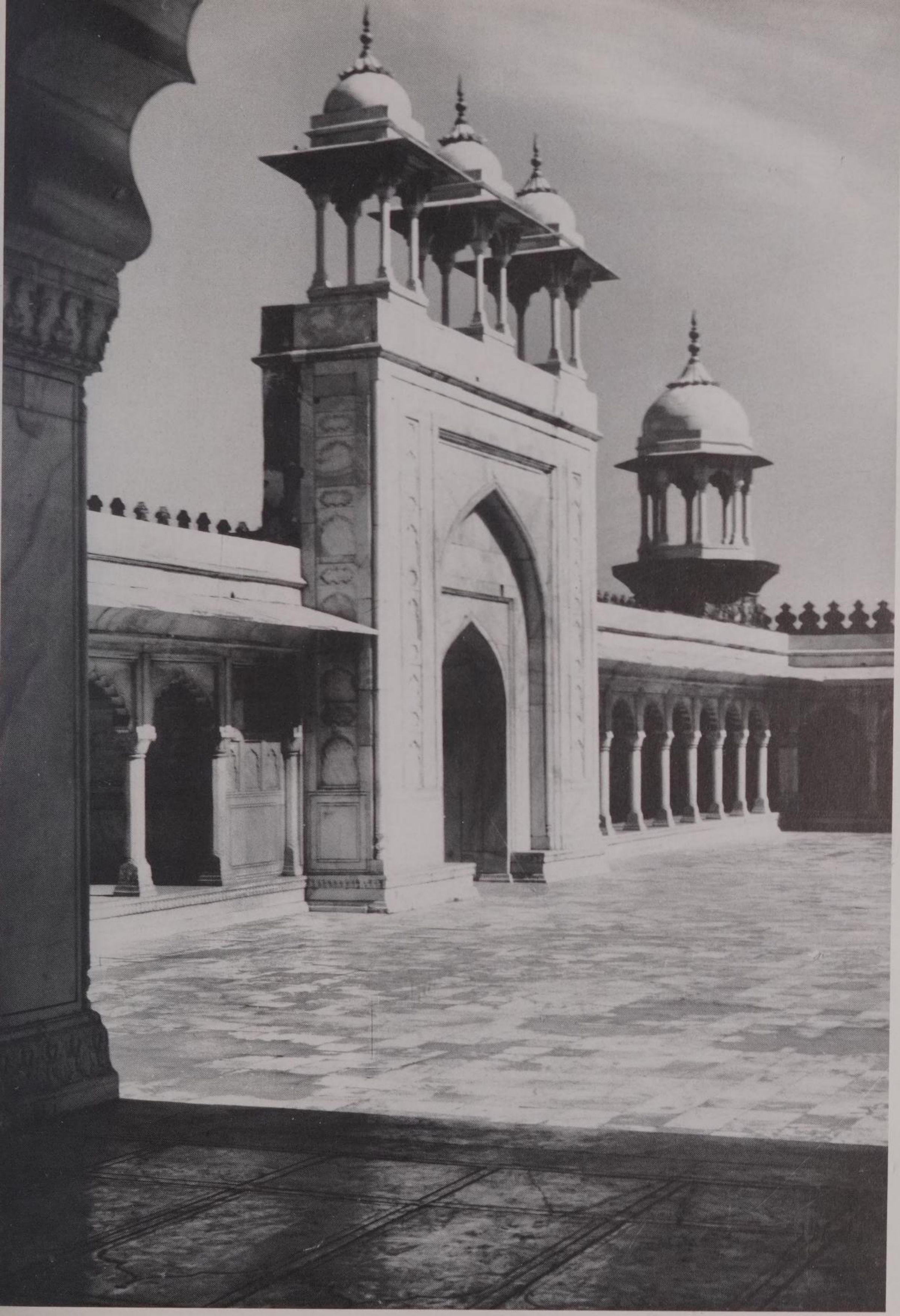


475. Musamman Burj, Agra Fort

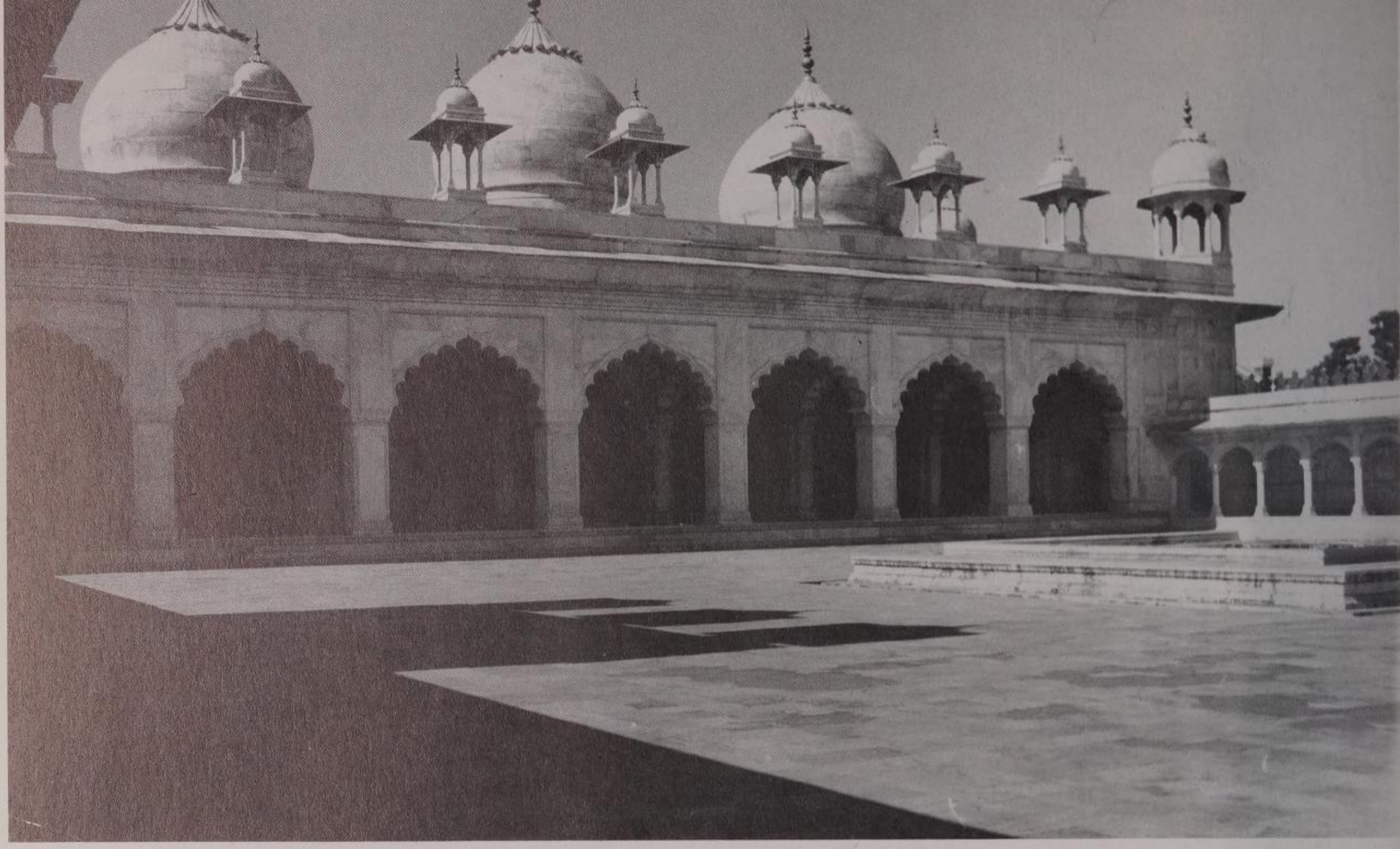
476. Musamman Burj, detail



477. Musamman Burj, detail

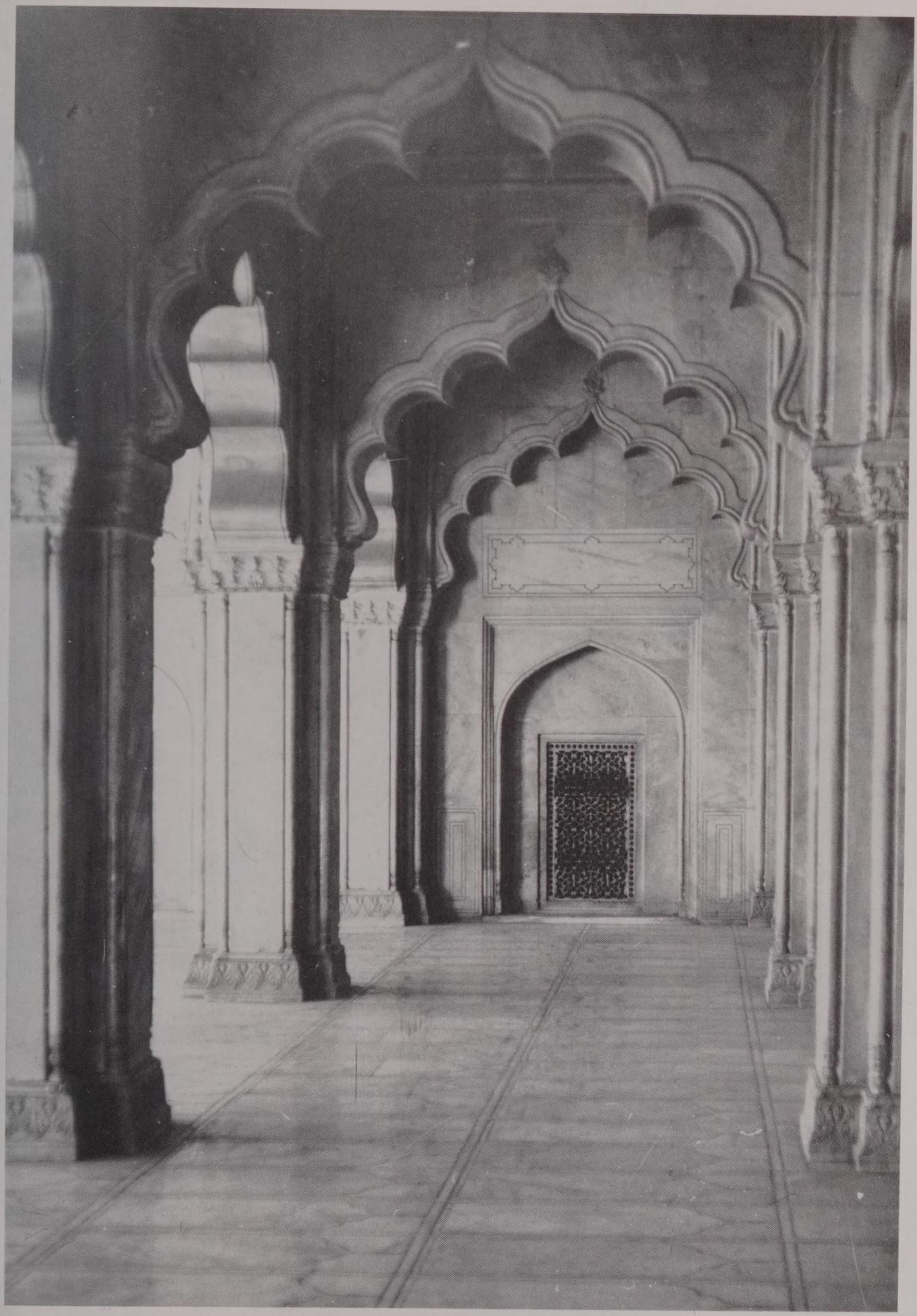


478. Moti Masjid, entrance gate, Agra Fort

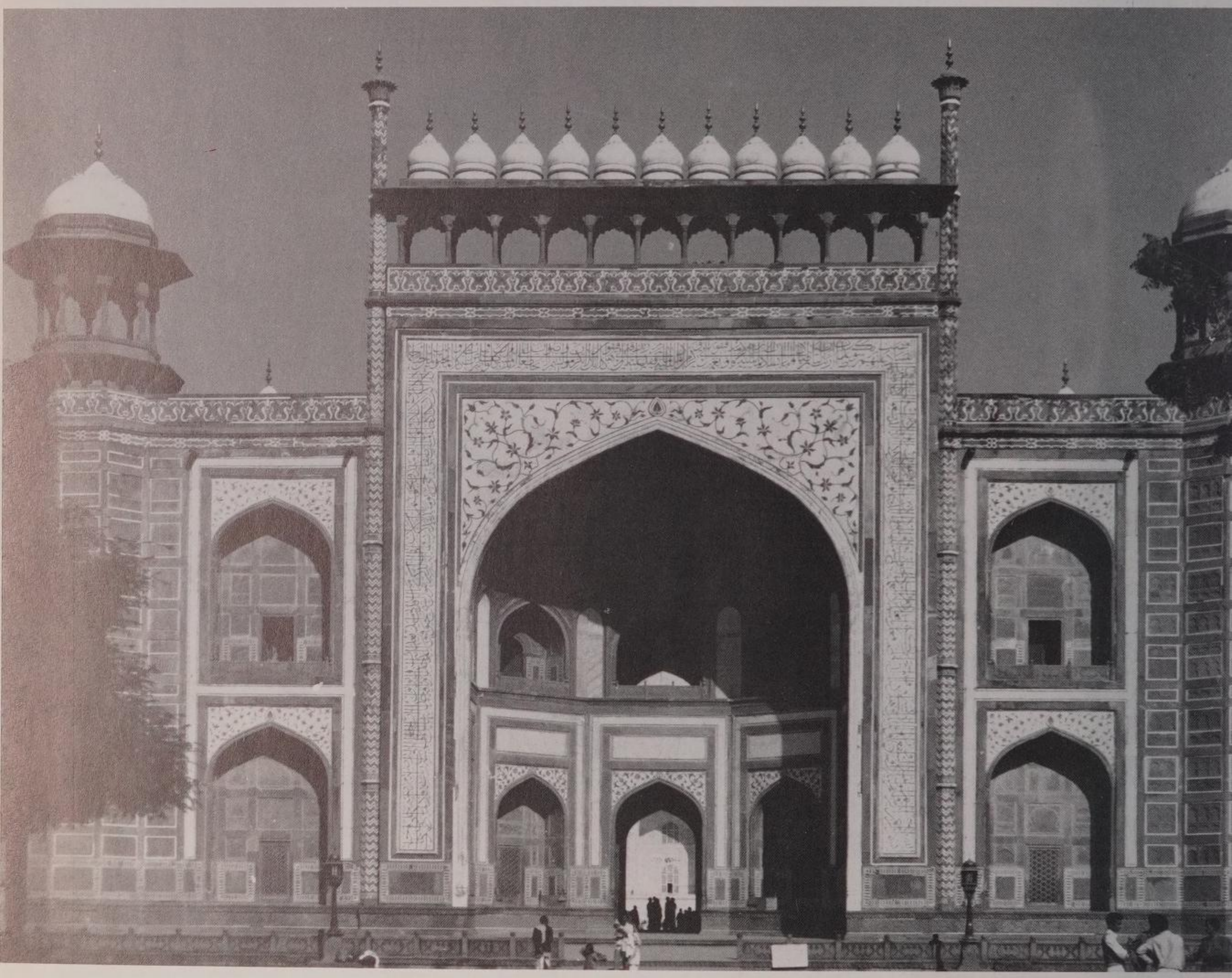


479. Moti Masjid, front façade

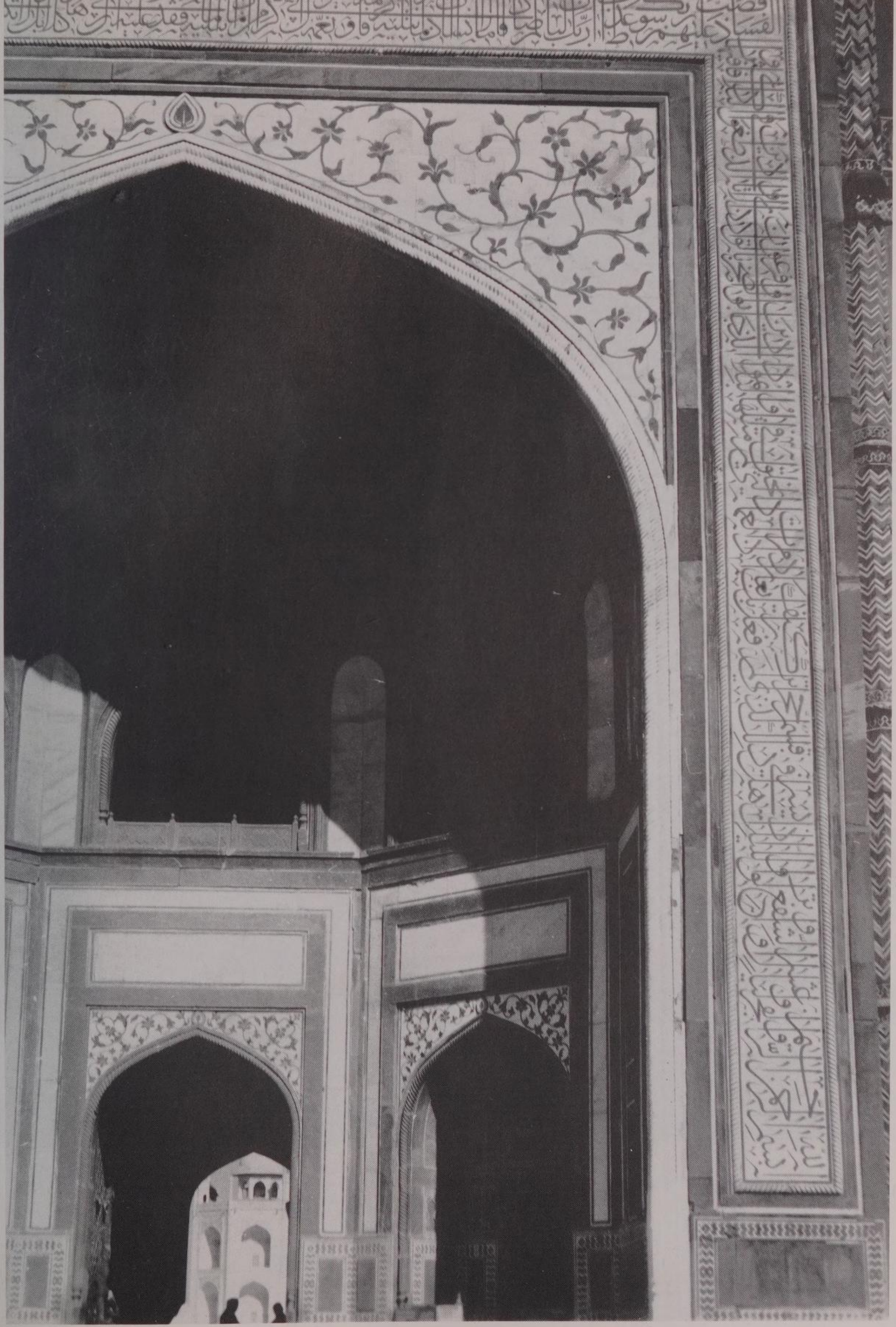
480. Moti Masjid, interior detail



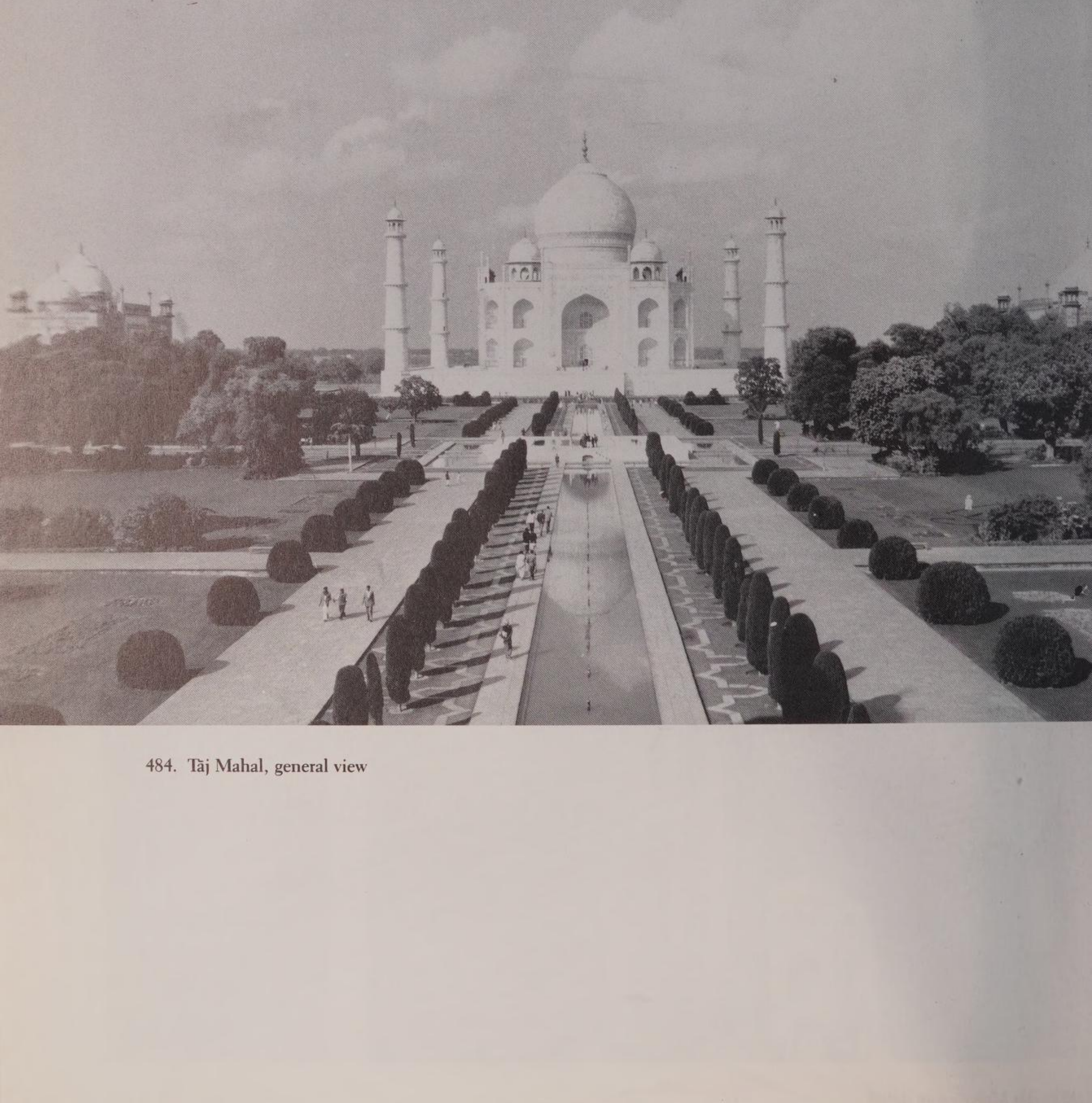
481. Moti Masjid, interior detail



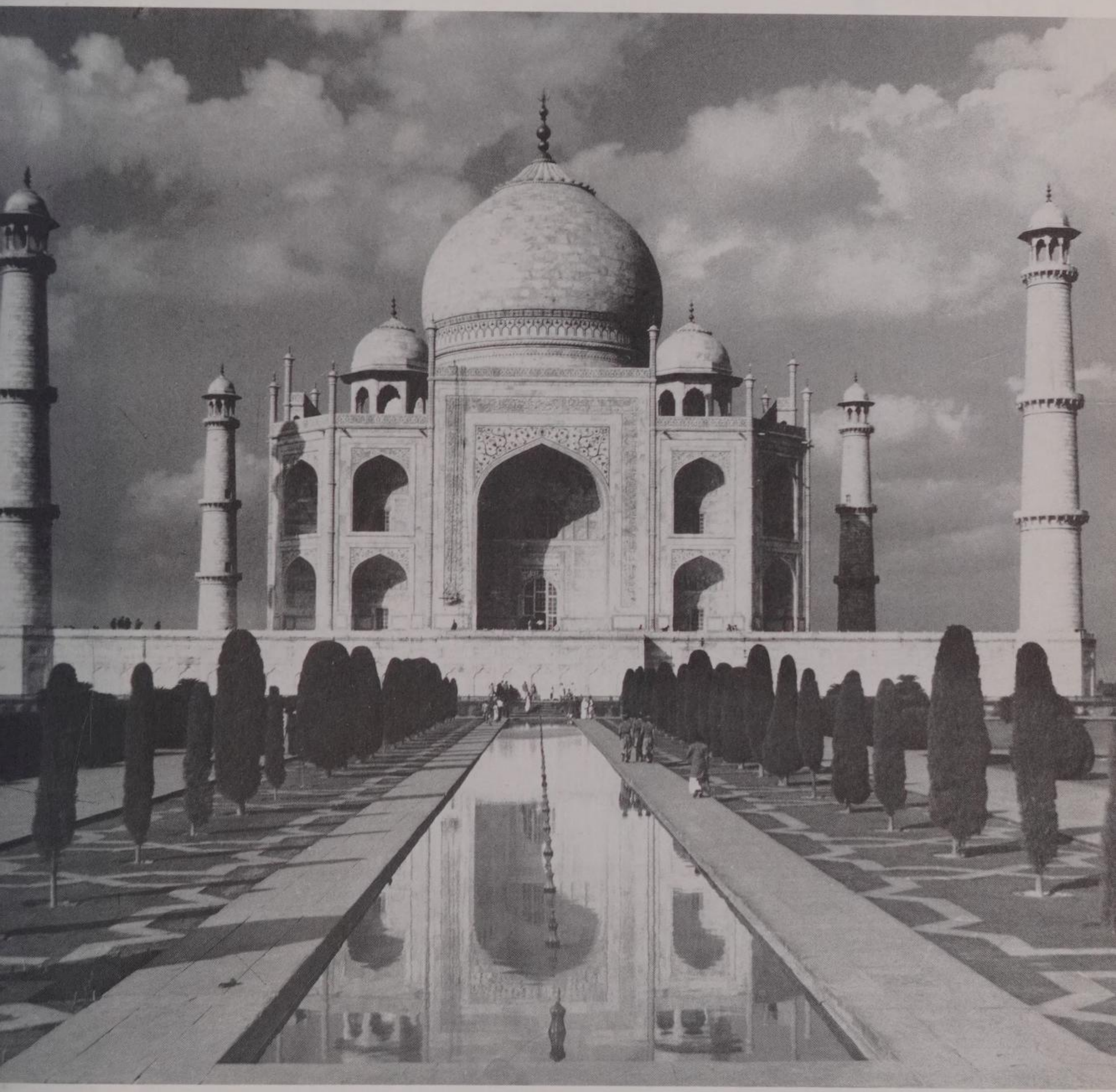
482. Tāj Mahal, entrance gate, Agra



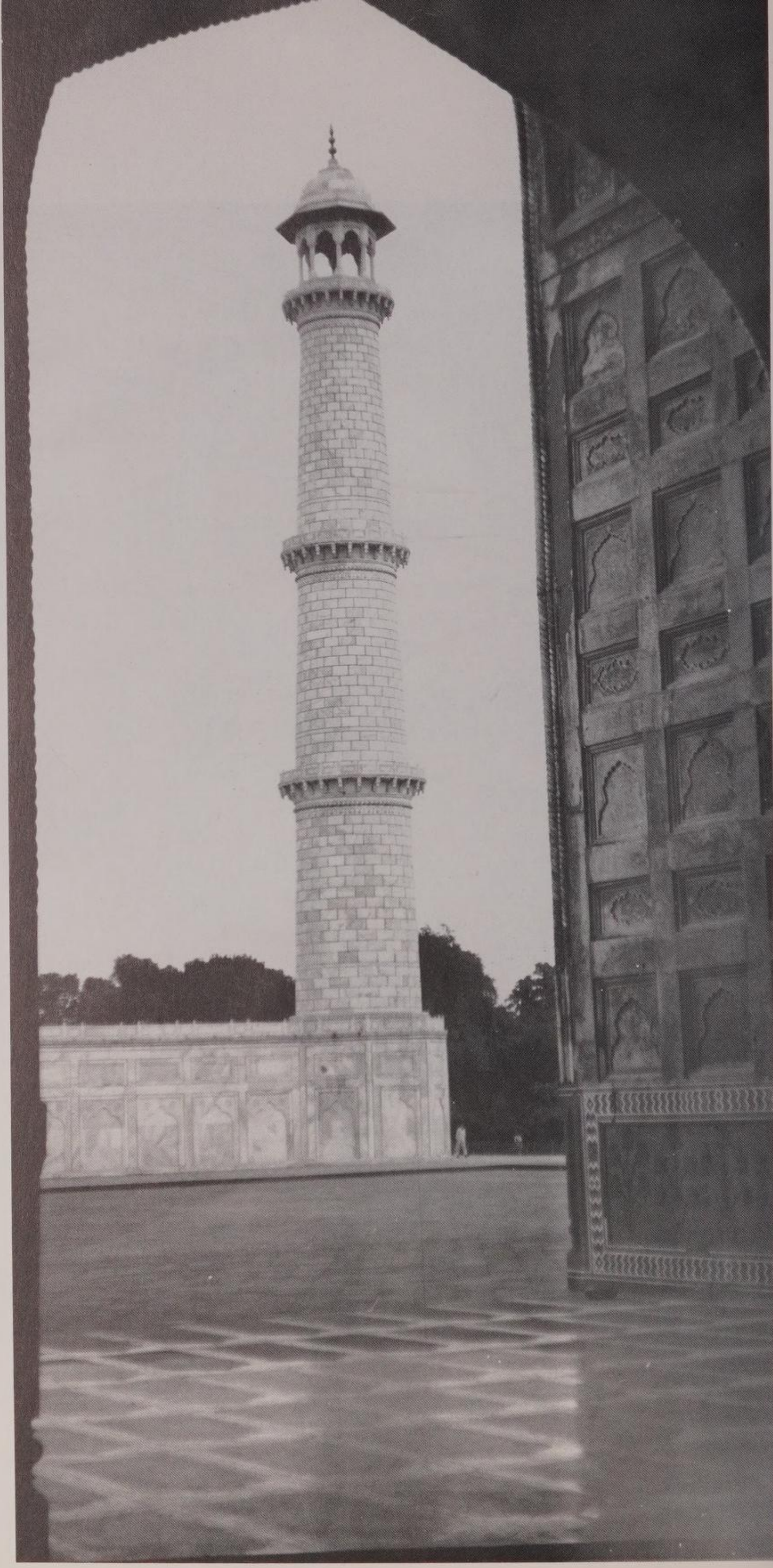
483. Tāj Mahal, gate detail



484. Tāj Mahal, general view

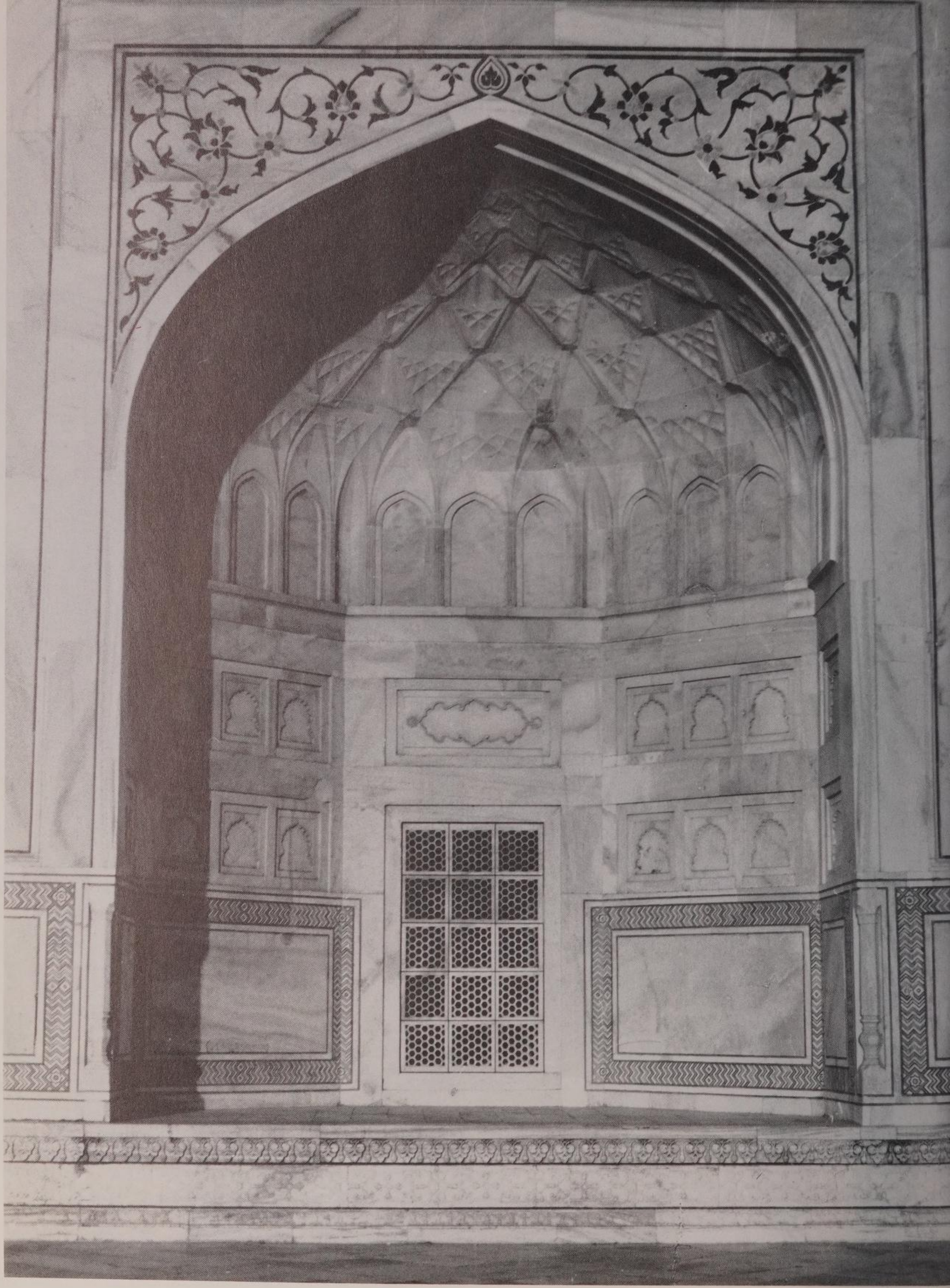


485. Tāj Mahal, general view



486. Tāj Mahal, minaret

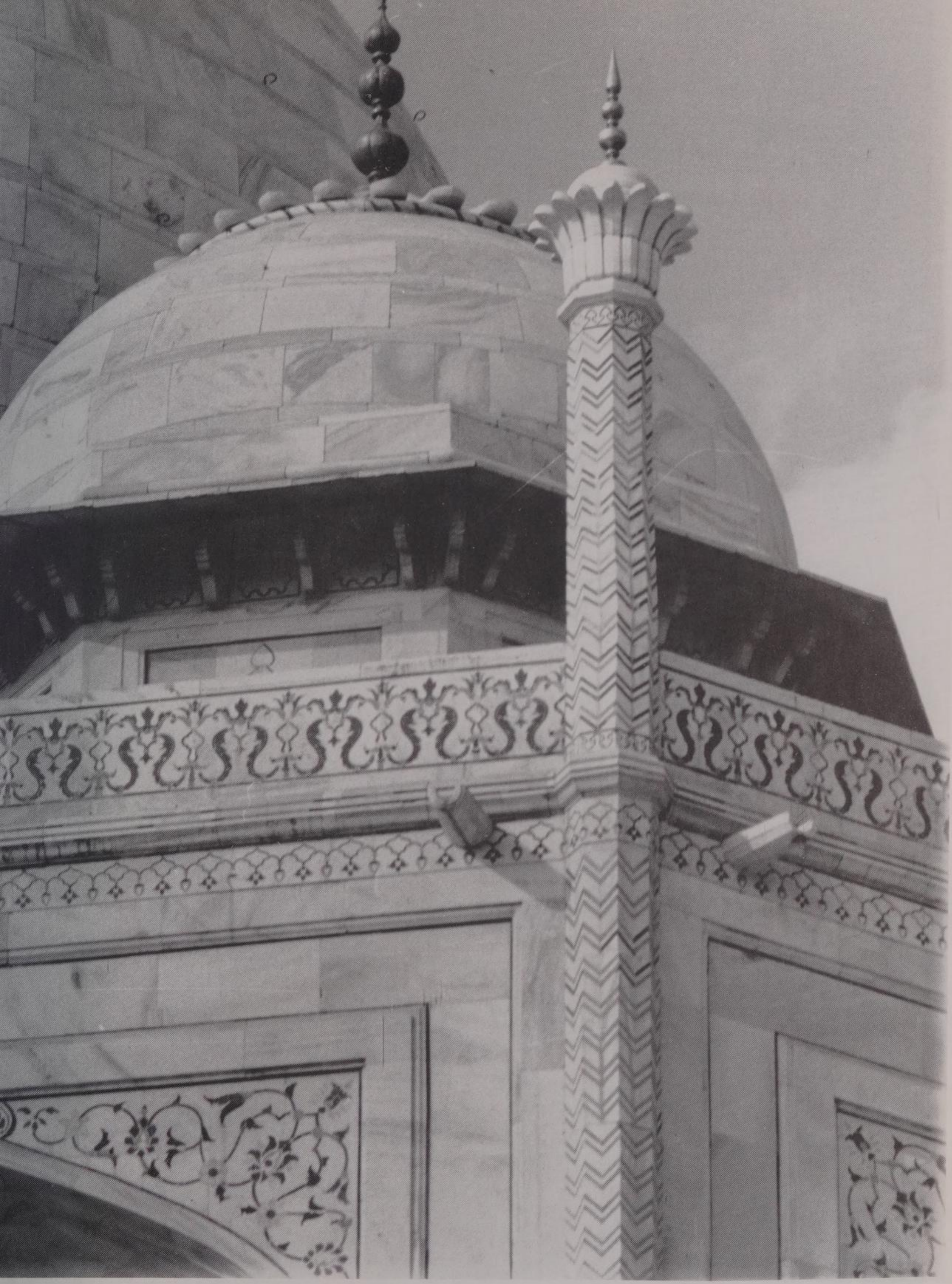
487. Tāj Mahal, façade detail

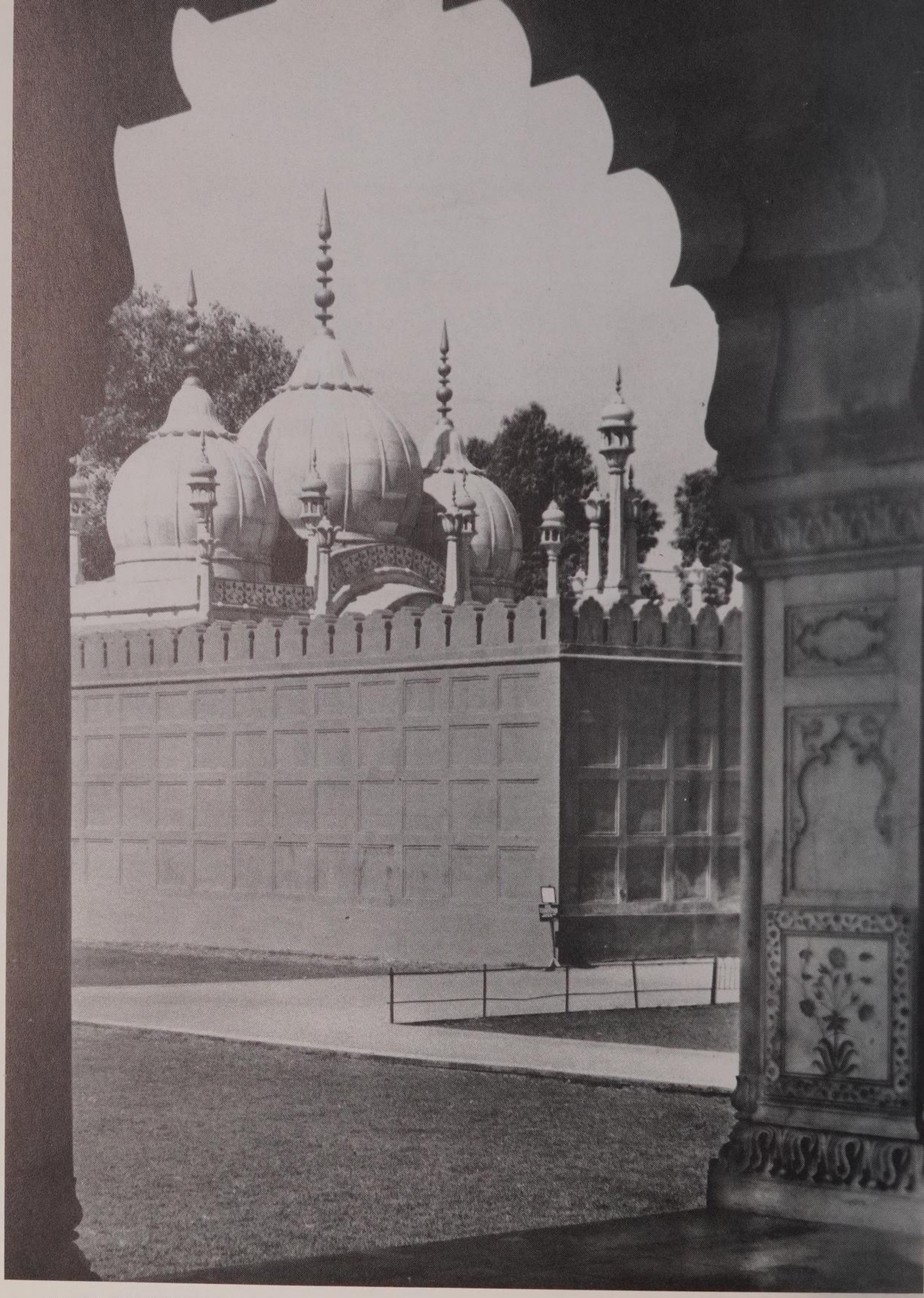


488. Tāj Mahal, façade detail

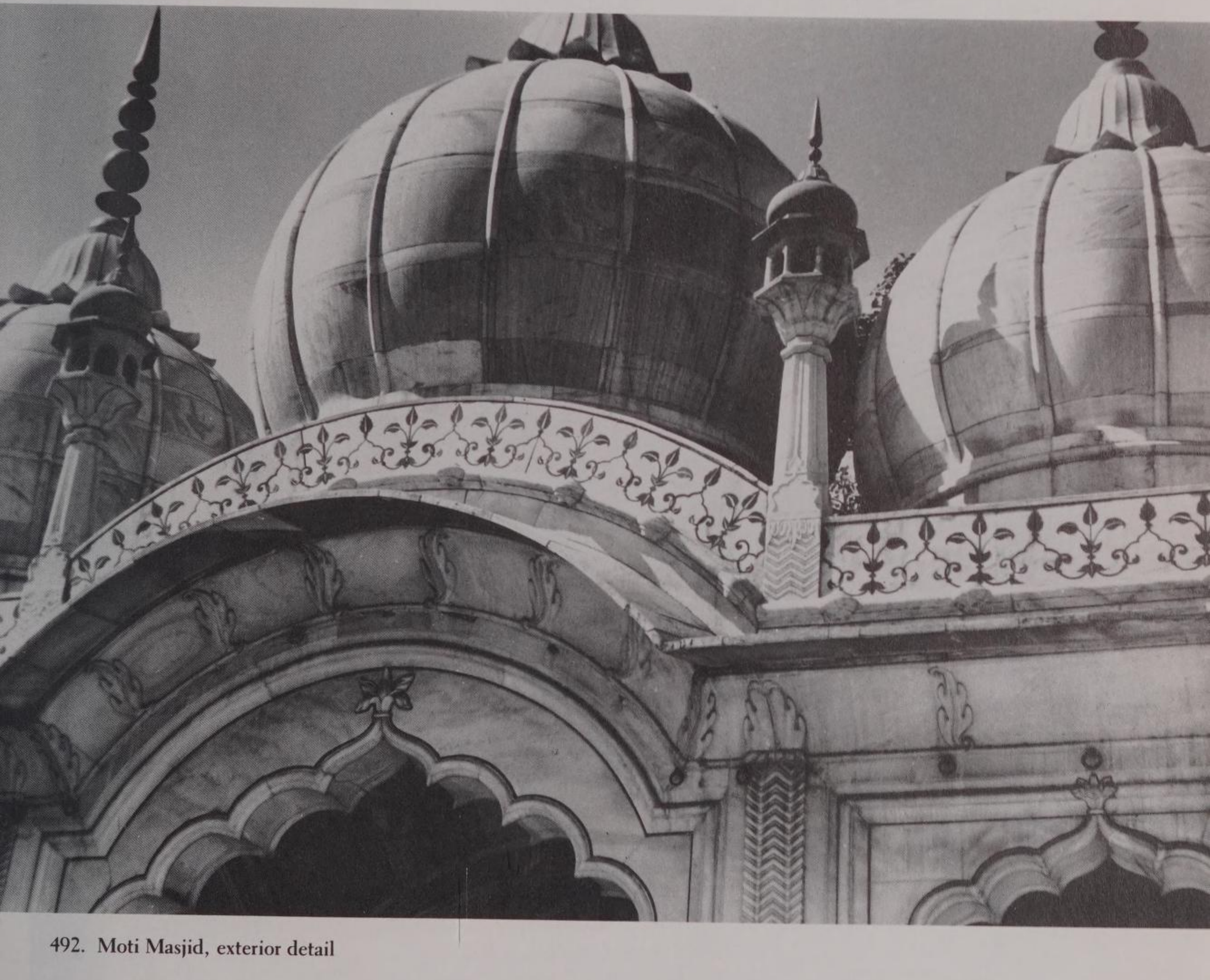
489. Tāj Mahal, detail of inlay

490. Tāj Mahal, detail of domes

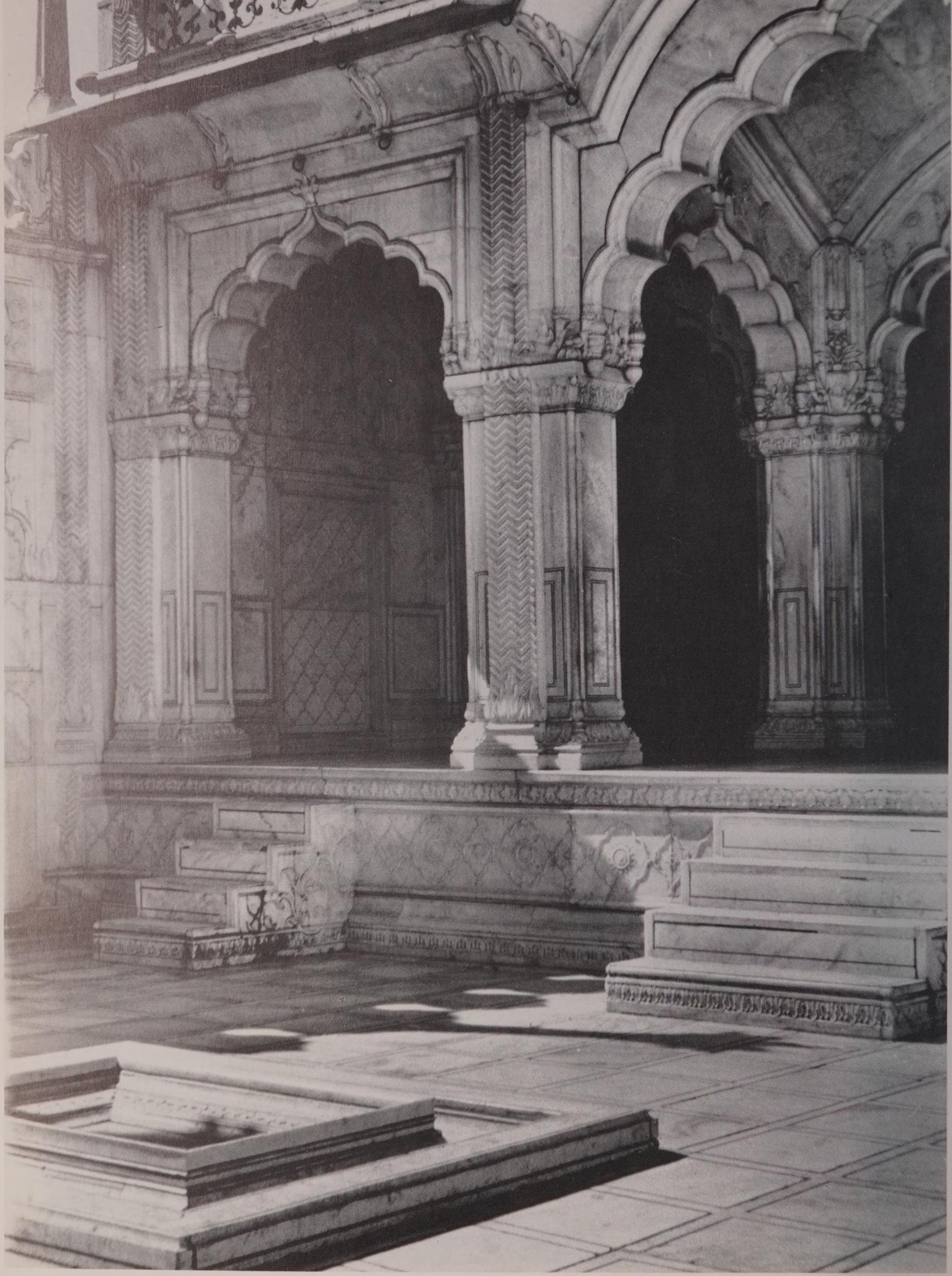




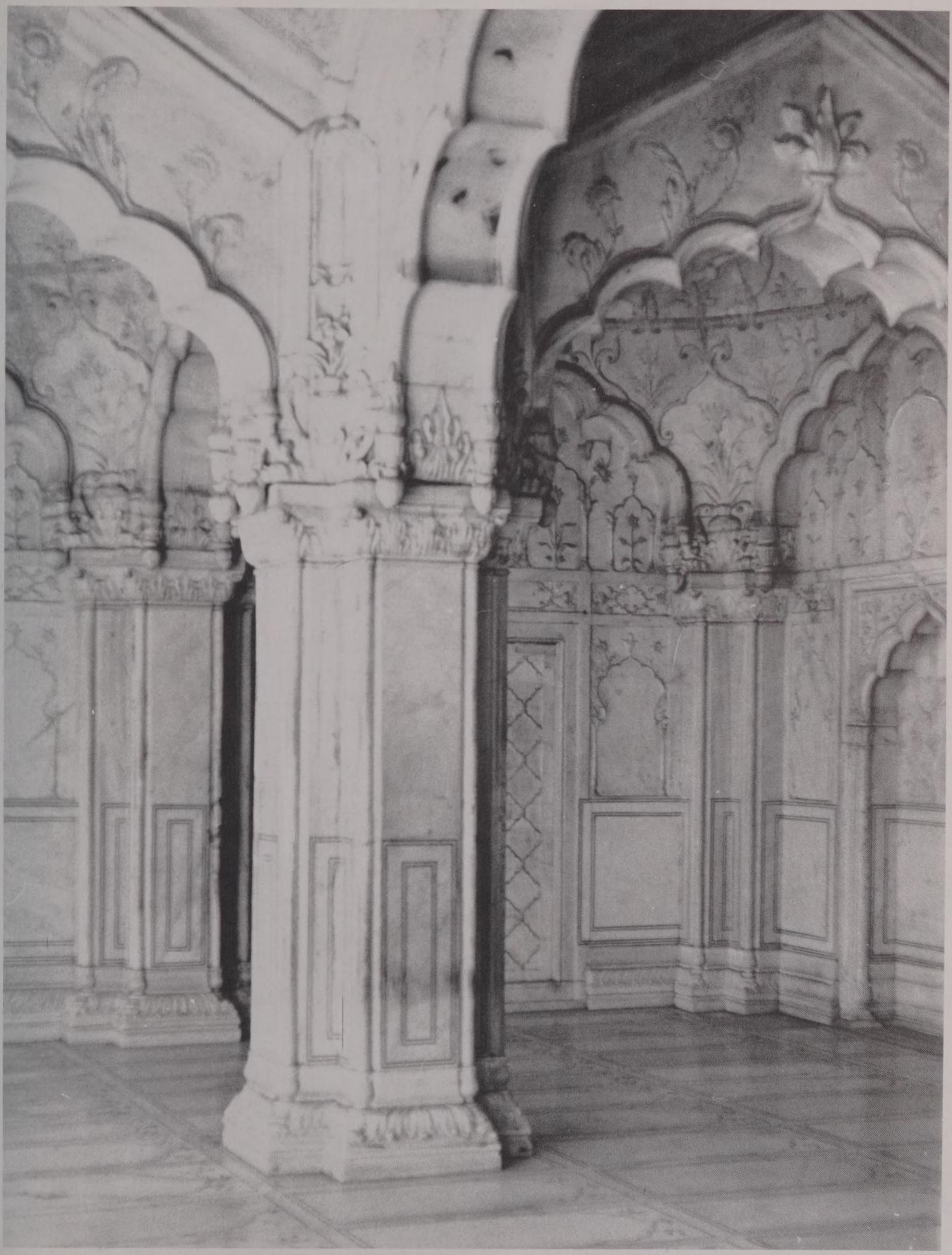
491. Moti Masjid, Red Fort, Delhi



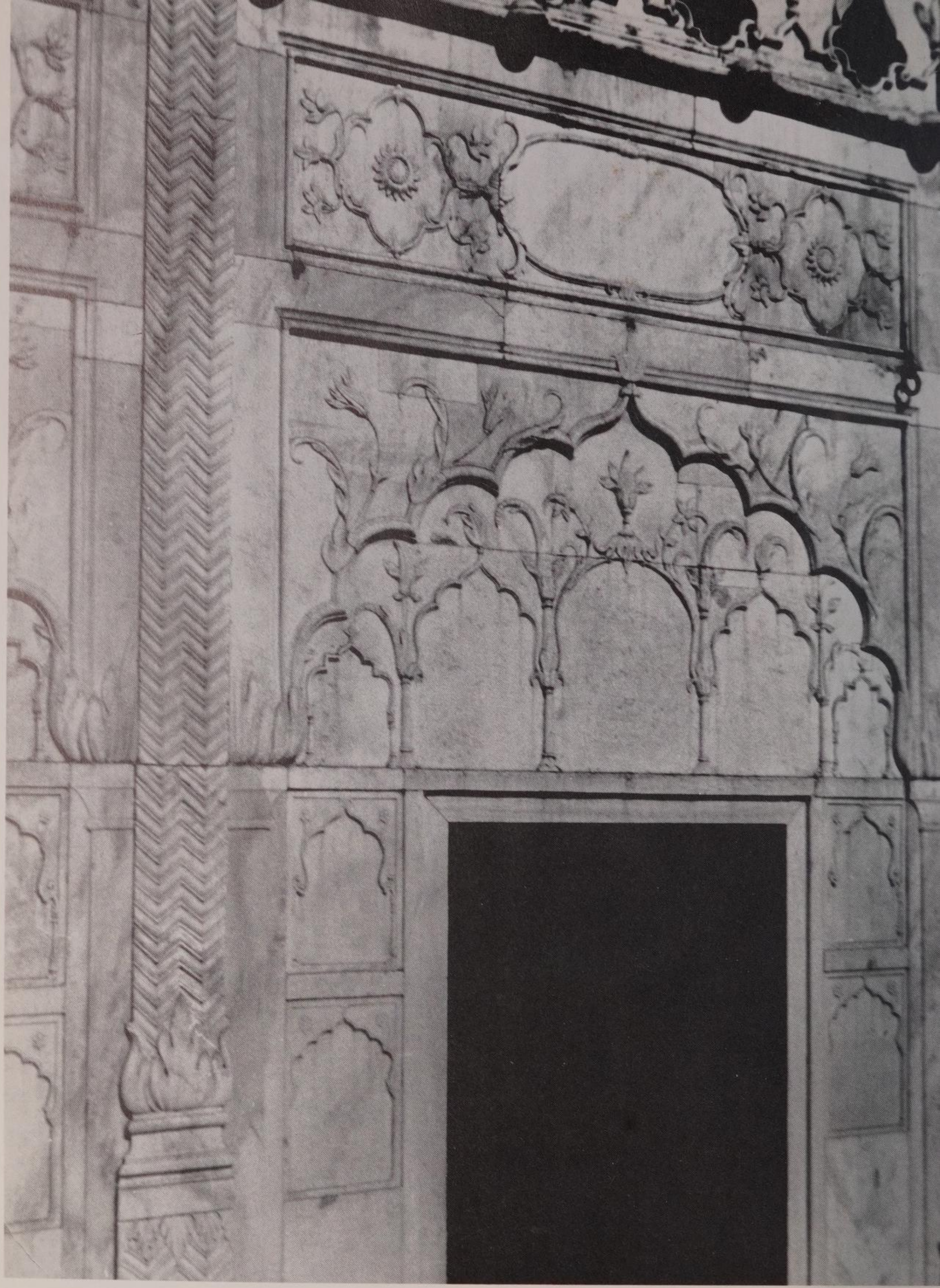
492. Moti Masjid, exterior detail



493. Moti Masjid, front façade



494. Moti Masjid, interior detail



495. Moti Masjid, interior detail

Notes

Introduction

1. H. G. Rawlinson, *India, a Short Cultural History* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1952), 5–7.
2. Gregory L. Possehl, *Harappan Civilization* (New Delhi: Oxford and I. B. H. Publishing Co., 1982), 223, and Rawlinson, *India, a Short Cultural History*, 7.
3. Rawlinson, *India, a Short Cultural History*, 8.
4. Hermann Goetz, *India, Five Thousand Years of Indian Art* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959), 25. Also see A. L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*, 3d rev. ed. (New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1967), 24–25.
5. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*, 15.
6. Possehl, *Harappan Civilization*, 223.
7. Ibid., 239.
8. Benjamin Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1959), 19.
9. Ibid., 19.
10. 4.4.5, quoted by Rawlinson, *India, a Short Cultural History*, 42.
11. Majjhima, i.79; quoted Jataka, i.390, quoted by T. W. Rhys Davids, *Early Buddhism* (London: Archibald Constable Co., 1908), 7.
12. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*, 249–51. Also see Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India*, 28–29.
13. Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India*, 28–29.
14. The Eightfold Path includes Right Understanding, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Meditation, and Right Action.

1. Early Indian Architecture

1. Sir John Marshall, *A Guide to Sāñchī*, 3d ed. (Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1955), 152–54.
2. The dimensions for Sāñchī are taken from Marshall, *A Guide to Sāñchī*.
3. There is no complete agreement on dates for the early Āndhra period. See Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India*, 62.
4. Marshall, *A Guide to Sāñchī*, 26–28.
5. Sir John Marshall, director general of archaeology in India from 1902–34, did a great deal of research on the iconography of the carvings at Sāñchī. The three-volume work *The Monuments of Sāñchī*, by Sir John Marshall and Alfred Foucher, with translations and notes on the inscriptions by N. G. Majumdar, fully discusses the iconography and inscriptions of the Sāñchī carvings. For the brief descriptive notes included here I am entirely indebted to Marshall's *A Guide To Sāñchī*.
6. Marshall, *A Guide to Sāñchī*, 50.
7. Heinrich Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955), 1:162.
8. Marshall, *A Guide to Sāñchī*, 78.
9. Ibid.
10. Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India*, 63.
11. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu)*, 3d ed. (Bombay: D. B. Taraporevala Sons, 1956), 26–27.
12. Ibid., 28.
13. Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia*, 1:223–24.
14. Krishna Chandra Panigrahi, *The Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneśvar* (Calcutta: Orient Longmans, 1961), 204.
15. Brown, *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu)*, 38.
16. Sherman E. Lee, *A History of Far Eastern Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1964), 91.
17. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (New York: Weyhe, 1927), 59–61.
18. There is disagreement on this part of the Buddha's head. J. N. Banerjea says that it is incorrectly called a *ushnisha* and that it is simply the plastic form of hair done up in a topknot in the center of the head. See Jitendra Nath Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, 2d ed. (Calcutta: Calcutta University Press, 1956), 288.

2. The Development of Art and Architecture during the Gupta Dynasty

1. *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu)*, 56.

3. The Development of the Indian Temple

1. *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, 97.
2. Brown, *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu)*, 78.
3. Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India*, 154ff.
4. Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia*, 269–70.
5. Percy Brown's *Indian Architecture*, 59–60, states that there are only nine caves rather than twenty. He identifies cave 19 as cave 9. It may be that more caves have been discovered since his book was published. See *Vidisha and Its Vicinity*, 3d ed. (Gwalior: Information and Publicity Division for Madhya Pradesh, 1963), 6–8.
6. J. C. Harle describes the boar incarnation of Vishnu as having a human head. See his *The Art and Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1986), 95.

4. Early South Indian Architecture

1. The term *ratha* means a processional car or chariot that is used on festival days to carry the idols of Hindu deities. These temple cars are still used on festival days in South India. Some stone shrines were built to simulate chariots, and though the Māmallapuram rathas have no wheels carved in their bases, the term *ratha* is generally applied to them.
2. O. C. Gangoly, *The Art of the Pallavas* (New York: George Wittenborn, 1957), 15.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., 20.

5. The brilliant sunlight and deep shadows resulting from the high cliff produce strong highlights and canyons of shadow. The deeply cut ornament on the architectural forms also causes strong dark and light surface patterns. The Kailāsanātha was once covered with a white or very light plaster, some of which still adheres to the stone. Some of the stone is also covered with black mildew. All of these conditions tend to make the Kailāsanātha less photogenic than one might wish. For an explanation of the iconography of the Kailāsanātha complex I am indebted to Ramesh Shankar Gupta and B. D. Mahejan, *Ajantā, Ellorā, and Aurangabad Caves* (Bombay: D. B. Taraporevala Sons, 1962).

6. Ibid., 207.

5. Post-Gupta and Later Architecture

1. *Guide to Gwalior* (New Delhi: Tourist Division, Ministry of Transport, 1956), 4.

2. *The Art of India* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1959), 297. Hermann Goetz places it early in the eighth century under late Gupta art. See Goetz, *India, Five Thousand Years of Indian Art*, 252.

3. Although some of the Orissan temples are earlier than Teli-ka-Mandir, some are later, and since I am presenting the Bhubaneśvar temples as a group, it seemed logical that this single, early shrine at Gwalior Fort be placed here.

4. Vajrayāna Buddhism, like Tantric Hinduism, stresses the union of male and female energies. The word *vajra*, which means thunderbolt and is also the term for male genitals, symbolizes the Buddha's creative power and gives its name to the Vajrayāna School. The male-female principle in the evolution of the world is represented by the Buddha embracing his female potency (Śakti), the goddess Tara.

5. Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneśvar*, 66–67.

6. Ibid., 26ff.

7. Ibid., 60–61.

8. Panigrahi points out that this temple, which has been called Mukteśvara by scholars describing Bhubaneśvar temples, is locally known as Siddhesvara, and that the word *Mukteśvara* is grammatically incorrect. The correct form should have been Kuktiśvara. See his *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneśvar*, 87n.

9. Ibid., 163.

10. See *Khajurāho* (Calcutta: Directorate of Information and Publicity, Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal, 1958), 13.

11. Ibid., 12.

12. Stella Kamrisch, *The Art of India* (London: Phaidon Press, 1954), 14–15.

13. Muni Shri Jayantavijayaji, *Holy Ābu* (Baroda: University of Baroda Press, 1954), p. 24 of the forward.

14. Ibid., vii–ix.

15. *The Art and Architecture of India*, 180.

16. Lee, *A History of Far Eastern Art*, 209.

17. I have included this late phase of architecture produced in the South by the patronage of the last great Hindu dynasties merely to round out the cycle of Indian architecture before the Muslim invasion was felt in this area, not because of its aesthetic contribution. South India's high point in architecture was achieved under the Chola dynasty. The vigorous and fanciful productions of the Vijayanagar dynasty represent the baroque period. The Nāyak dynasty and its capital city of Madura, the final phase, produced no new forms, only a ripening architecture.

7. Hindu Shrines under Muslim Rule

1. Brown, *Indian Architecture (Hindu and Buddhist)*, 158.

8. Indo-Muslim Architecture

1. Rawlinson, *India, a Short Cultural History*, 241.

2. Brown, *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu)*, 55.

3. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Islamic Period)*, 3d ed. (Bombay: D. B. Taraporevala Sons, 1956), 11.

4. Ibid., 12.

5. *India, Five Thousand Years of Indian Art*, 194.

6. Brown, *Indian Architecture (Islamic Period)*, 25.

9. The Moghul Period

1. Art historians do not agree on the dates for the Jahāngīrī Mahal, some dating it with the early buildings at Agra Fort (c. 1570), others placing it much later but during Akbar's reign, and still others attributing it to Jahāngīr's reign. Most historians attribute it to Akbar and assume that he built it for his son, Jahāngīr, the heir apparent. Its design is in the Akbar tradition.

2. Brown, *Indian Architecture (Islamic Period)*, 103.

3. Ibid., 105.

4. Vincent A. Smith, *The History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon* (Oxford: D. B. Taraporevala Sons, 1930), 161–62.

5. *India, Five Thousand Years of Indian Art*, 218.

6. Brown, *Indian Architecture (Islamic Period)*, 117.

(Continued from front flap)

dwelling place for monks and a cave temple, or chaitya-hall, for congregational worship.

To ornament their buildings the artist-craftsmen of ancient India worked in low-relief carving, apparently to take advantage of the strong contrasts resulting from the brilliant sunshine. The combination of molded edges, dark shadows, and strong highlights therefore creates the illusion of three-dimensional forms.

The construction in stone of India's temples and their development into a more or less standardized design occurred during the Gupta period, during the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. The temple is considered the abode of the deity to which it is dedicated and is thus itself an object of worship—it's design conceived as a diagram of the universe, a structure pulsating with life.

Over the centuries the architectural ornament of India has greatly inspired the country's artists and craftsmen. It's place as a source of inspiration to others is affirmed by Allen's work.

About the Author

Margaret Prosser Allen was born in Vancouver, B.C., and moved to Spokane, Washington, at the age of one. She received B.A. and M.F.A. degrees from the University of Washington with a major in art, and she taught at the high-school level in Ellensburg and Seattle, and at the college level at Adams State in Colorado and, for over thirty years, at the University of Delaware. She has also exhibited her paintings in many group and single-artist shows. She spent a sabbatical year in India visiting and photographing its architectural treasures. Some of this photographic work resulted in the Smithsonian Institution's sponsoring a traveling exhibition that dealt with the ornament of the Sāñchī stupas.

LC 89-40766
ISBN 0-87413-399-8
Printed in the U.S.A.

University of Delaware Press
London and Toronto:
Associated University Presses